SC has spoken on presidency—Sandigan

Story on PAGE A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

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100-kph road sex, OK; but hit-and-run, no

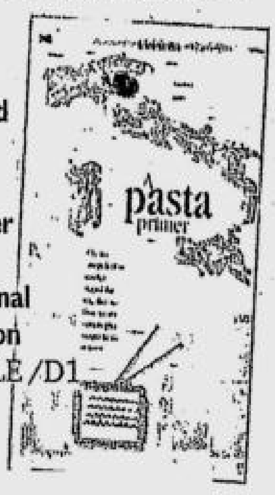
KAILANGAN MA-KONTROL KO ANG SEX DRIVE KO!

BERLIN—Having sex while driving at 100 kph down a motorway is not an offense in Germany. But if you hit something, make sure you don't run off.

A Cologne court fined a man who admitted he was having

100-KPH/A13

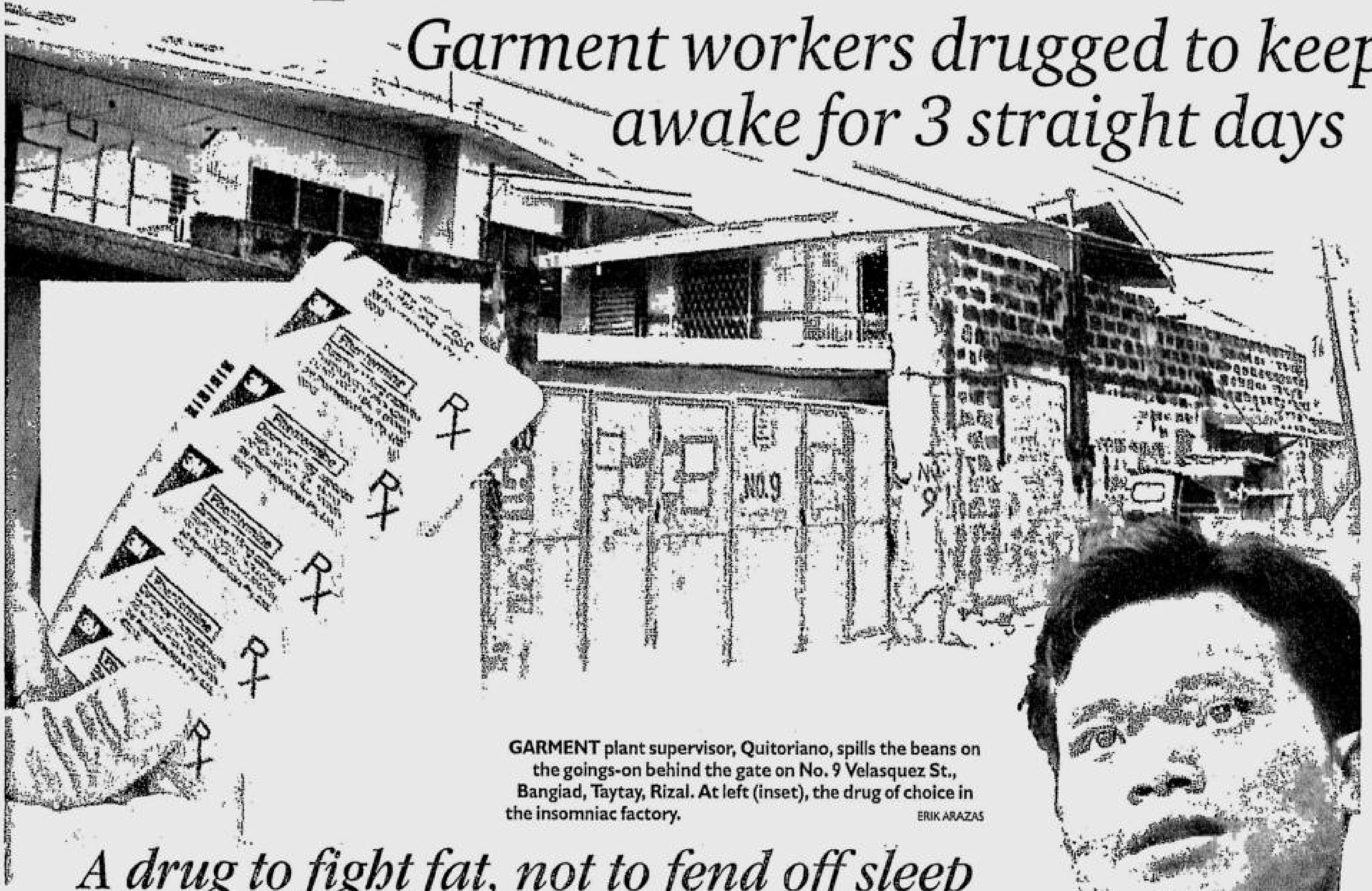
AWARD OF EXCELLENCE



INQUIRER food page wins award in 24th Best of Newspaper Design international competition LIFESTYLE /D1

Sleepless in sweatshop

Garment workers drugged to keep them awake for 3 straight days



GARMENT plant supervisor, Quitoriano, spills the beans on the goings-on behind the gate on No. 9 Velasquez St., Bangiad, Taytay, Rizal. At left (inset), the drug of choice in the insomniac factory.
ERIK ARAZAS

By Luige del Puerto, *Metro Desk*
and Romel Lalata, *Inquirer Libre*

SPECIAL REPORT

IN THE UNCERTAIN world of subcontracted companies, work is normally seasonal and even then comes in fits and starts, wages below par, and working conditions hardly improved from those of a century ago.

For Anvil Ensembles, a garments factory in Taytay, Rizal, that makes baby clothes for First World companies, business usually blows in by September. A few weeks before then, the company sends notice to workers who have been idled for a month or two to report to work because job orders are coming in and there are quotas to be met.

For these high-speed sewers and machine operators, mostly women, that means occasionally putting in 48- or 72-hour work shifts whenever management orders the factory gates shut and locked until Saturday or Sunday morning. Everyone understands that there will be no going home.

From then on, there is no stopping the whirr of high-speed sewing machines that drowns out the chatter and the banter managed during slower days. But when workers are on their second, or third, consecutive all-nighter, being unable to talk to one another is the least of their worries. Keeping awake is.

Rouel Quitoriano was one of those whose job it was to prevent any delay in production schedules and shipment deadlines, lest the company end up paying fines to principal contractors.

As supervisor of the workers at the annex, Quitoriano had to make sure that no

SLEEPLESS/A5

A drug to fight fat, not to fend off sleep

"I (WOULDN'T) prescribe this drug."

That was the emphatic reaction of Dr. Nelia Maramba, a professor emeritus of the UP-Philippine General Hospital Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, when she learned that some factory workers were being given the drug Duromine (generic name phentermine) to keep them awake.

Maramba said the antiobesity drug should not be used to fend off sleep.

Dr. Lynn Crisanta Panganiban, head of the UP-PGH Poisons Control Unit, agreed: "You cannot just prescribe this drug. You have to check the blood pressure, the heart rate and evaluate the patients before you give it to them."

Panganiban and Maramba were visibly shaken when told that the drug was being given to workers. They shook their heads vigorously when asked if they would recommend the drug to workers so they could keep working.

"No, no, no," they said.

Duromine is a regulated drug in the Philippines—it cannot be bought without a doctor's prescription.

Other medical literature label it an anorectic (appetite suppressant). It be-

A DRUG/A5

GMA sees tie-up between terror groups, drug rings

By Juliet Labog-Jayellana,
Christian V. Esguerra and Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is convinced that there is a conspiracy between terrorist groups and drug syndicates in Mindanao.

The President raised the issue of the "tie-ups" yesterday at a command conference on the government's campaign against illegal drugs at the Mindanao State University conference room in Marawi City.

"I would like to bring home the message to our Muslim brethren that this war against drugs is as much their own as it is of the entire nation," she said, adding:

"There have been growing tie-ups between terrorist groups and drug syndicates in Mindanao, and it is about time we met these deadly conspiracies head-on."

The military will also play a key role in the campaign, Ms Macapagal said in a keynote speech at the 56th anniversary of the Philippine Air Force.

She said the government would call in the military to "supplement" the operations of the police and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) "whenever necessary, replicating in our anti-illegal drug campaign the inter-operability of police and military forces under the leadership of the PDEA."

She also said the military, particularly the PAF, had played a significant role in the campaign by uprooting marijuana plantations in Mindanao. "You will con-

GMA/A13

Police still in the dark on Go ambush

By Margaux Ortiz
Metro Desk
and Marc Anthony Reyes
Sports Desk

A DAY after the daring ambush on sports official Go Teng Kok, the Western Police District is still in the dark as to the identity and whereabouts of his assailants.

Chief Insp. Gerry Agunod, WPD spokesperson, did not return the calls of reporters seeking confirmation or copies of the assailants' sketches that he spoke of in a radio interview earlier yesterday.

In that interview, Agunod claimed that the WPD already had artist's sketches of the men who shot Go, president of the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association (Patafa), at about 8 a.m. Tuesday.

"Our witnesses have positively identified the suspects," Agunod said.

But WPD director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong said that as far as he was concerned, there was no positive development in the case.

He said the WPD was still gathering evidence and investigating the assassination attempt on Go, who was trans-

POLICE/A13

NDF rejects JDV's peace overtures

By Carlito Pablo
and Juliet L. Javellana

EXPLORATORY talks initiated by Speaker Jose de Venecia with rebel leaders based in The Netherlands have failed to revive stalled peace negotiations between the government and the communist-led National Democratic Front.

Four meetings starting June 26 produced no agreement on the resumption of formal peace negotiations, a government official privy to the informal talks yesterday told the INQUIRER.

"The NDF demanded its delisting from the list of terrorist organizations by the United States and member-countries of the European Union," said the official, who asked not to be identified.

"The government, for its part, raised concern over what appears to be a stepped up offensive by the New People's Army," the same source said.

Sought for comment, chief government negotiator Silvestre Bello III said the two parties planned to meet again at the end of the month.

Bello, head of the government panel for talks with the NDF, said the two par-

NDF/A13

FORTICH: Brave fighter for peace and justice

Fortich, bishop of the poor, dies; 89

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The "bishop of the poor" and "man of peace," who was an outspoken advocate of human rights even in the most trying times of martial law, died peacefully in his sleep at the Riverside Medical Center here at 8:15 a.m. yesterday.

Bishop Emeritus Antonio Y. Fortich succumbed to systemic infection and multiple organ failure secondary to diabetes, according to his attending physician, Dr. Angel Araneta.

Fortich was 89. He was to turn 90 on Aug. 11.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said the death of Fortich was a great loss to the Filipino people.

"He was a champion of the poor and the oppressed, a courageous vanguard of peace and justice," the President said in a statement. "He was blessed by a great faith in God and in the people, whose love and affection he will carry forever."

Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin called Fortich "a tireless shepherd and a prophet of the poor and the oppressed."

FORTICH/A14

Confessed bomber cries, seeks forgiveness

By Philip C. Tubeza

"I AM prepared (to die) so I can enter paradise."

With these words, confessed terrorist Muklis Yunos (also known as Saifulla Yunos) yesterday broke into tears and begged forgiveness after state prosecutors showed him photos of mangled bodies following the Rizal Day bombings in Metro Manila three years ago.

Yunos, 31, who has also confessed to membership in the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, said he would prefer to be executed than detained.

"I'd rather (die by) firing squad than go to jail," Yunos said during the resumption of the Department of Justice's preliminary investigation of the Light Rail Transit bombing on Dec. 30, 2000. On the same day, there were four other bombings that killed a total of 22 people and wounded more than a hundred others.

Yunos said he carried out the LRT bombing in retaliation of the military attack on the MILF's Camp Sarmiento that he claimed "killed more than 1,000 people." The camp, in Matanog, Maguindanao, actually fell to government forces on May 31, 2000.

"For us Muslims who committed wrong, we should get the firing squad so that we would no longer think (of what we did)," Yunos told reporters in halting Filipino.

Yunos spoke mostly in Maranao, his native dialect, and his words had to be translated by National Bureau of Investi-

CONFESSED/A14

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THURSDAY, JULY 3, 2003

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience partly cloudy to cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms. SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/07/03/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Plot to bomb Naia bared

Captured MILF documents show rebs withdrew P6B from 1999 to 2001

MUSLIM separatist guerrillas plotted to bomb the Ninoy Aquino International Airport last year and have organized terrorist training in the country's south, according to a military analysis of captured rebel documents.

The documents also strongly indicate the Moro Islamic Liberation Front may be getting weapons and financial support from abroad, said the confidential military report seen by The Associated Press.

The MILF has been blamed for bombings and other attacks that have killed more than 200 people this year.

The military said it seized boxes of MILF documents during a major offensive in February on the rebel stronghold of Buliok, a marshland straddling the southern provinces of Maguindanao and North Cotabato.

Car bomb at Naia

The military report said the rebels planned to detonate a car bomb at the Naia in February last year, but the plot fell through for unexplained reasons. It said there were also plans to bomb other unspecified airports last year, but that no attacks took place.

"The MILF had a standing plan to bomb airports using car bombs as early as 2002," the report said.

The guerrillas were not immediately available for comment, but rebel spokesperson Eid Kabalu had said earlier the military may have fabricated the documents to support accusations of the MILF's links with foreign terrorists and to justify military attacks.

The rebels were blamed for two bombings outside two airports in Mindanao this year. In February, an 81-mm mortar shell exploded near the gate of Awang airport in Maguindanao province, killing a soldier and setting a cluster of shops and restaurants ablaze.

Davao bombing

MILF leaders were charged in the second bomb attack that killed 22 people, including an American missionary, outside Davao airport in March.

The guerrillas have denied involvement in both attacks and insist they have no links with foreign terrorist groups. Authorities have alleged the rebels have ties to al-Qaida-linked Jemaah Islamiah, but the military report did not link the two.

Among the recovered items from Buliok were receipts showing a large payment allegedly made by the MILF to a foreigner, identified as Rim Kyu-do, in what appeared to be an arms deal. Found with the receipts was a brochure about a midget submarine, indicating the rebels had planned to acquire one, the military said.

Also recovered were money wrappers from various Philippine banks that indicated the MILF withdrew more than P6 billion ($113 million) between July 1999 and April 2001, the report said. There were no indications how the money was spent.

Foreign support

"The volume of money that passed through the hands of the MILF as evidenced by the documents examined strongly suggests foreign support," the report said.

NINOY AQUINO
INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
MABUHAY

NAIA TERMINAL: Terrorist target

An undated photograph showed MILF chair Salamat Hashim meeting a Libyan ambassador to Manila. The Libyan Embassy was not immediately available for comment, but Libya has been involved in talks between the rebels and the Philippine government.

The military said the rebels were training for ambushes and assassinations, with one document showing that seven foreign-trained MILF men held a course on the manufacture of land mines between 2000 and 2002, according to the report. Even minors were being given military training, it said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration backed off from a planned resumption of peace talks with the MILF earlier this year after blaming the rebels for a series of terrorist attacks and bombings in the south.

The rebels have recently renounced terrorism as demanded by Ms Macapagal, and both sides resumed efforts at restarting talks with the help of neighboring Malaysia. *AP*

Joker fumes over 'secret deal' with Danding on coco levy funds

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE MACAPAGAL administration and business tycoon Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco may have already forged a secret agreement on the disputed coconut levy funds, administration Sen. Joker Arroyo said yesterday.

"Malacañang and Danding Cojuangco have come to terms over the coco levy funds, San Miguel (Corp.) and United Coconut Planters Bank," Arroyo said in a statement.

Arroyo, however, refused to give details of the deal which he blamed on President Macapagal-Arroyo's "unofficial rapacious advisers."

He said it was enough at this time to call attention to the suspicious timing of a deal with Cojuangco when the issue of the funds' ownership was still awaiting resolution by the Supreme Court.

'Preemptive strike'

The levy funds, collected as a forced tax from coconut farmers from 1973 to 1982 through a decree issued by the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, is now valued at over P100 billion.

The government and the country's coconut farmers claim that Cojuangco, who was appointed by Marcos as administrator of the levy, had allegedly used the funds to acquire ownership and control of SMC, UCPB and various coconut-related businesses.

The deal was not just suspicious but also a "preemptive strike against the Supreme Court decision," Arroyo said.

He said there was no reason to enter into a deal with Cojuangco because of the ownership case that is still pending before the SC.

"Why is Malacañang in a haste (to settle the issue)? Is this a matter of life and death?" the senator asked.

Arroyo decried the timing of the deal when the President's ratings have improved which could just be spoiled by deals being maneuvered by her unnamed advisers.

"She is back in contention for reelection. We wish her well," Arroyo said.

The maverick senator also invoked the moral dimension in the coconut levy issue which should have militated against Palace officials pursuing out-of-court negotiations over the controversial funds.

"What is at stake here is the morality of the nation," said Arroyo, stressing that Malacañang should have waited for a judicial decision from the SC.

Arroyo said all the speculations about a reorganization in the Senate leadership or in committee assignments in the wake of the death of Sen. Rene Cayetano was "nothing compared to all this talk about" the levy funds.

"The Senate reorganization is petty . . . childish. The [coco levy funds] is the one that affects the nation," he said.

A check with the records showed, however, that the cases involving the ownership of the levy funds are with the Sandiganbayan anti-graft court, not the Supreme Court.

However, the SC has already declared the coco levy funds as "prima facie" (apparently) public funds.

In its Dec. 14, 2001 ruling, the SC determined the "prima facie" nature of the funds to allow the government, through the Presidential Commission on Good Government to exercise its right to vote the sequestered shares of the UCPB.

The SC ruled that the UCPB sequestered shares were "indisputably acquired with coconut levy funds which are public in character."

It in effect upheld the PCGG claim that the UCPB was 94.29-percent sequestered, with the remaining shares owned by the Cojuangco-owned First United Bank.

Cojuangco appealed the decision which was denied with finality by the high court on Feb. 30, 2002.

'Without merit'

It ruled that Cojuangco's motion for reconsideration was without merit, and ordered him and the other affected parties to stop seeking remedy from the SC.

The high court said that "indeed this litigation must come to a definite end now."

But the SC clarified that its Dec. 14, 2001 ruling did not delve into the "primordial issue" of whether the UCPB had "legitimately become their [Cojuangco et al] property."

Only the Sandiganbayan which has jurisdiction over the coco levy cases could do so, it said.

The SC explained it had merely determined the "prima facie" nature of the funds used to acquire the sequestered shares "only for the purpose of enabling us to rule on the issue of who has the right to vote the shares in the meantime."

The Sandigabayan has yet to comply with the SC directive to rule on the ownership question, however.

The cases pending with the anti-graft court involve the shares, in the name of Cojuangco corporations, with the UCPB, the Coconut Industry Investment Fund Oil Mills and the SMC.

San Miguel to come out with more Danding ads

By Dona Pazzibugan

DESPITE the controversy over his initial television commercial, San Miguel Corp. chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco is reportedly set to release more such commercials wherein he would personally appear to promote the company's products.

The SMC management disclosed this plan during the board meeting Thursday, where the government-appointed directors voiced their objection to such commercials.

The government, through the Presidential Commission on Good Government, has protested the ad, accusing Cojuangco of using funds of the sequestered beer conglomerate to promote his political plans.

At the same board meeting, Cojuangco reportedly admitted that he is considering running for president next year.

The government claims that 47 percent of SMC shares, including a 20 percent bloc that Cojuangco personally claims, were bought with coco levy funds which Cojuangco administered during the Marcos regime.

PCGG Commissioner Ruben Carranza yesterday disclosed what transpired at the board meeting based on the report of the government directors.

"We're not satisfied with the explanation of the management (that the ads are not political)," Carranza said.

He said the directors were even told that another set of advertisements featuring Cojuangco is forthcoming.

He said the ads could not be mere marketing gimmick since "Cojuangco didn't deny he was considering running for president."

"What's important here is perception. The coconut farmers perceive the ads are political and that their money is being used for his political plans," Carranza said.

Meanwhile Carranza stood his ground against Cojuangco's supporters, Rep. Prospero Nograles (Lakas, Davao City) and Cojuangco's nephew Rep. Gilbert Teodoro (NPC, Tarlac) who were quoted as urging the PCGG to go easy on Cojuangco because he is an ally of the administration.

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'HEARSAY, PASS-ON INFO'

Sabaya alive? Military denies priest's claim

By TJ Burgonio
and Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

MILITARY officials yesterday strongly denied fresh claims by Fr. Cirilo Nacorda that Abu Sayyaf leader Abu Sabaya is still alive a year after he was reported killed by government troops in Zamboanga del Norte.

Nacorda, the parish priest of Lamitan, Basilan who accused the military of colluding with the Abu Sayyaf during the hostage-taking and siege of a hospital in the town in June 2001, said Sabaya was not just alive but was also organizing an armed force and had joined the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

"At this point, Fr. Nacorda's revelations are considered hearsay and 'pass-on' information and will stay that way until it is validated by other sources," said Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero, Armed Forces chief information officer.

Lucero maintained that the bandit group's flamboyant spokesperson was killed during a clash with the Marines off the waters of Sibuco town in June 2002.

The bodies of Sabaya, whose real name was Aldam Tilao, and those of two other Abu Sayyaf members were never recovered.

Abu Muslim

Nacorda said his source claimed Sabaya with some 40 followers was with MILF rebels somewhere in Barangay Kawit in Sibuco.

"He is now known as Abu Muslim and not Sabaya," he said.

Sabaya and his 40 followers joined the MILF in attacking Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte on May 4, Nacorda said, still quoting his source.

Lucero said it was possible that a bandit leader may be using Sabaya's name to confuse the authorities and local residents.

"This habit of using the name of a notorious rebel leader is a normal practice in Southwestern Mindanao. It is one of the psychological tactics of rebel groups in Mindanao to use the namesake of their known dead leaders for propaganda purposes," he said.

Lucero said the military was taking into account Nacorda's revelations as this might lead "to other details that may locate where the MILF-ASG formation is operating."

The Abu Sayyaf, which started out as a group of Islamic preachers that degenerated into a band of kidnappers for ransom, victimizing mostly foreign tourists, is suspected of links with the MILF.

Nacorda said his source was a Tausug fisherman from Basilan who approached him for help on June 26.

The man, who was in his mid-thirties, "appeared very paranoid and afraid, but revealed more sensitive information that could really prove Sabaya is alive," he said.

Nacorda said the fisherman claimed that the reported sea encounter in Sibuco where Sabaya was allegedly killed, was a "scripted operation."

"(The fisherman) was the one who prepared and assembled the speedboat supposedly intended for Sabaya, and he assembled the vessel in Sta. Cruz island in Zamboanga City, a week before the operation. He was working with the Philippine Marines official identified as certain Capt. Aragones (Capt. Giram Aragones)," Nacorda said.

Nacorda said the source, whom he identified only by the initials "UM," acted as a liaison between the Abu Sayyaf and the AFP.

"He moved around Basilan and as far as Zamboanga peninsula using his fishing boat to bring food and ammunition to the Abu Sayyaf during the captivity of the Burnham couple," Nacorda said.

Rehearsal

Col. Juancho Sabban, the officer who led the Oplan Black Archer operation that was supposed to have killed Sabaya, merely laughed off Nacorda's claim.

"Maybe what he saw was a rehearsal before the implementation of Oplan Black Archer," Sabban said.

He explained that every operation involves a game plan that goes through a series of rehearsals involving a limited number of military officers before the actual implementation.

He confirmed that the officer who led the series of rehearsal was Capt. Aragones, "so the possibility is what the guy witnessed was actually really a scripted operation but he was never within (sight of) the actual operation."

Sabban described the actual operation as "perfect in execution with live video coverage which was even broadcast live in some agencies in the United States."

He accused Nacorda of lying and challenged the priest to produce Sabaya.

Maj. Gen. Trifonio Salazar, the 1st Tabak Infantry Division commander, said he would verify Nacorda's report.

While convinced that Sabaya is dead, Salazar said: "We will check on that, we might not hit the ghost of Sabaya, but we will definitely hit the MILF there."

REMINDER

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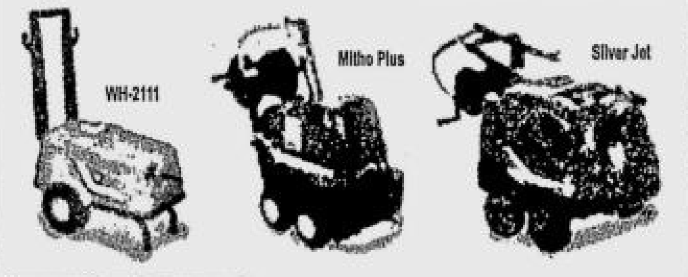

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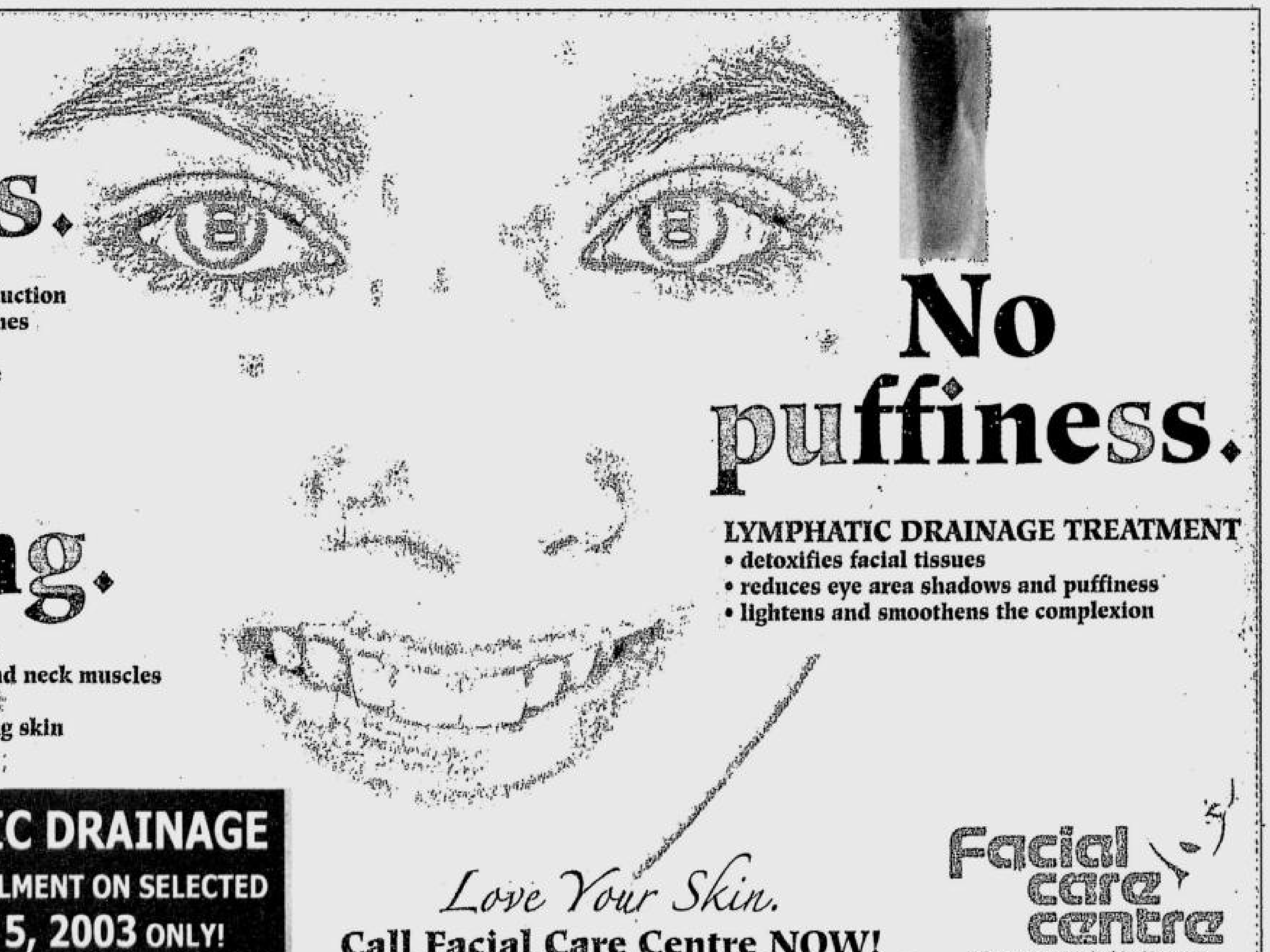

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MON. - FRI. (8 AM - 7 PM) / SAT. (8 AM - 5 PM)

Sandigan rebuffs new Erap lawyer

SC has spoken on presidency; Davide, GMA need not testify

By Armand N. Nocum

THE SANDIGANBAYAN anti-graft court yesterday threw out a motion by jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada asking the court to put his successor President Macapagal-Arroyo, Chief Justice Hilario Davide and others on the witness stand as part of a strategy to win acquittal in his plunder case.

Saying it would be "rank absurdity" for the Sandiganbayan to invalidate a Supreme Court ruling that the succession of Ms Macapagal to the presidency was legal, the court also denied a motion by Estrada seeking to dismiss the plunder charges against him, arguing that he was illegally ousted by the second Edsa people power uprising in January 2001.

"There is only one Supreme Court from whose decision all other courts take their bearings," the Sandiganbayan said.

Estrada's lawyers had asked the special division trying the case against the disgraced leader to place Ms Macapagal and Davide on the witness stand to support their contention that he was illegally ousted.

They argued that the chief justice connived with Ms Macapagal to oust Estrada from office even as the presidency had not been officially declared vacant.

No authority

In its 11-page decision yesterday, the Sandiganbayan said it did not have the "authority to go behind a final decision of the Supreme Court and question the motives/biases of the justices who rendered such decision."

It said the Sandiganbayan had limited powers over the Supreme Court and any move to "invalidate a final and executory decision of the highest court of the land would be rank absurdity."

As Estrada lawyer Alan Paguia vainly tried to convince the court to grant the ex-president a "one in a million" exemption from the law, the court reminded Estrada that it was only the laws of the land that kept states from falling apart.

"Acceptance of the rule of law in a community is a prerequisite of freedom; where the acceptance is significantly qualified or rejected, there is a danger of the withering of the law and of the freedom which rests on it," said the division led by Presiding Justice Minita V. Chico-Nazario.

A "large-scale refusal to accept the full implications of the court's decision" often "precedes a general collapse of the legal and political order," the court warned.

"The Sandiganbayan, as a legal institution, derives its powers strictly from the law creating it and such law does not give it any authority to go behind a final decision of the Supreme Court and question the motives/biases of the judges who rendered such decision," it said.

Citing a 1962 ruling, the court said that "once the decision becomes final, it is binding on all inferior courts and hence, beyond their powers and authority to alter or modify."

The Sandiganbayan said this was what gives "stability" in the law.

"It is the interest of the public that there should be an end to litigation by the same parties and their privies over a subject once fully and fairly adjudicated," it said, citing a 1987 ruling.

5 appointed to appeals court

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has appointed five new associate justices of the Court of Appeals.

The new CA justices are Arturo Brion, Rosalinda Asuncion Vicente, Arsenio J. Magpale, Jose C. Reyes Jr. and Jose C. Mendoza. The CA is composed of a presiding judge and 50 associate justices.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said the President signed the appointments on June 26 but they were released to the Supreme Court only last Tuesday.

Brion, a bar topnotcher from Ateneo, served as a labor undersecretary under the Macapagal administration. He moved to the Department of Foreign Affairs when Secretary Blas Ople was appointed to become his undersecretary for special projects.

Vicente was a magna cum laude graduate of the University of Sto. Tomas in 1968 and has been a Department of Justice lawyer for the past 32 years.

Magpale, who obtained his law degree from the University of the Philippines in 1962, had been a member of the bench for 14 years. He was a regional trial court judge in Quezon City.

Reyes, of San Beda class '77, was an RTC judge in San Mateo, Rizal. He has been in the judiciary for the past 10 years.

Mendoza, San Beda class '71, was judge in a special RTC for heinous crimes in Quezon City. For 15 years a member of the judiciary, he is also the executive judge of Quezon City.

Bunye said the President has not yet decided on who to appoint to the vacancy in the Supreme Court.

FLYING AGAIN

President Macapagal, assisted by Air Force chief Lt. Gen. Nestor Santillan, pours champagne on the nose of a newly repaired C-130 transport plane during yesterday's turnover ceremony in connection with the PAF's 56th anniversary at the Villamor Air Base. The plane underwent major repairs in Malaysia. The PAF has only two such planes but five more are scheduled for repairs in Malaysia.

VAL HANDUMON

SENATE SHAKEUP

Joker warns allies vs sharing power

By Michael Lim Ubac

SEN. Joker Arroyo yesterday cautioned the Senate leadership against sharing power with the minority without the concurrence of the entire ruling bloc.

"Nobody" from the administration bloc had the authority to dole out Senate committee chairmanships without the express approval of the majority, the administration senator said.

As Arroyo was no doubt aware, Senate President Franklin Drilon and three majority senators—Majority Leader Loren Legarda, Juan Flavier and Ramon Magsaysay Jr.—held a caucus at the Shangri-La Makati hotel yesterday.

The four met to discuss the chairmanship of the education and energy committees which had been left vacant with the death on June 24 of Sen. Renato Cayetano.

There have been suggestions that the education committee might be given to opposition Sen. Tessie Oreta.

Arroyo pointed out that any reorganization could not take effect until July 28 when the Senate resumes its sessions.

"So all these (rumors) about reorganization and [a Senate coup] are pure talk," said Arroyo. He refused to comment further on the issue saying it would only give credence to "petty" speculations.

In a statement, opposition Sen. John Osmeña pledged his support for Drilon's leadership.

"I am a member of the Senate minority, but I will not vote for the replacement of Drilon," he said.

He said it was not true that the minority wanted to take over the Senate leadership, saying any such move to unseat Drilon would not prosper as it would not have his support.

Without him, the minority would be outnumbered by two votes so the move would be impossible, he said.

"The only possible way to replace Drilon is the forming of an alliance between the nine members of the minority [minus Osmeña] and the so-called House bloc, sometimes called the Wednesday Group," said Osmeña.

The latter group consists of administration Senators Arroyo, Francis Pangilinan, Manuel Villar, Ralph Recto and Noli de Castro. "I doubt if the minority would agree to join forces with the group of Senator Arroyo," Osmeña said.

After yesterday's majority caucus, Legarda said she had agreed to stay on as majority leader as Drilon and the others had insisted, "for the sake of unity in the Senate."

But Legarda, whose term expires next year and is widely believed to be aiming for higher office, said she did not know how long she would remain majority leader with the 2004 election campaign set to begin next February.

Candidates for the 2004 election should file their certificates of candidacy by December.

Legarda has reportedly been asking to be let go as majority leader, expressing her preference for the education or agrarian reform committees.

But she said she had agreed to stay on "because I believe that the national interest should prevail over personal interest."

"We still have a lot of pending work in the Senate," she said.

Under the Senate rules, the majority leader can only chair the committee on rules.

Legarda and Magsaysay said they have given Drilon "blanket authority" to choose the chairs for the energy and education committees.

Drilon said that he was still consulting members of the majority coalition, some of whom are still abroad, before deciding who should chair the committees.

Legarda said she felt the committees should go to "whoever has the expertise, knowledge and can help best rather than whether he or she is from the majority or minority." *With a report from Christine Avendaño*

SARS crisis, bad economy stem flow of OFWs to HK

THE NUMBER of Filipinos seeking work in Hong Kong and Singapore plunged from January to May, for fear of catching the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome and the places' bad economies, a labor official said yesterday.

Acting Labor Secretary Manuel Imson said the usual stream of Filipino workers going to Hong Kong thinned by 31.8 percent and those to Singapore by 16.6 percent, compared to the same period last year.

The SARS crisis, he added, also adversely affected worker deployment in Canada which suffered an 8.3-percent decline.

The number of Filipino maids among foreign workers getting jobs in Hong Kong suffered the biggest decrease, the territory's immigration figures show. Their numbers slipped about 5 percent, from 140,400 to 133,570, while the number of Indonesian maids fell by 3 percent, from 75,980 to 73,780, and the number of Thais dropped by 5 percent, from 6,200 to 5,890.

The number of foreign domestic helpers in Hong Kong had been dropping for some time, but the decline gained momentum after SARS struck an already weak economy, said the labor attaché of the Philippine Consulate General, Bernardino Julve.

A surge in Hong Kong unemployment to a record 8.3 percent worsened the problem, he said.

"Naturally, if you lose your job, the tendency is really for you to fire your maid," Julve said. "You'd rather do the domestic chores yourself."

Julve expressed hopes that more Filipinos could find work in Hong Kong as the territory recovered, and said more employment contracts were now being processed.

Overseas Filipino workers are crucial to the Philippine economy, with most sending home hard currency to support family members.

The International Labor Organization itself said that the SARS crisis was expected to lead to lost income and production in East Asia and Southeast Asia worth more than $12 billion.

Imson said that a World Health Organization travel advisory, which, for a time, included the Philippines as a country to avoid because of SARS, also discouraged countries traditionally welcoming Filipino workers from employing them.

To counter this, Imson said the government moved to identify other "non-traditional" job markets such as Eastern European countries.

He disclosed that a government team was sent to Slovenia and Croatia for a market survey on their worker needs.

The Asian Development Bank, according to an ILO report, said that SARS would trim the 2003 Gross Domestic Product growth in East Asia by 0.4 percentage point and in Southeast Asia by 0.5 percentage point.

"The resulting cost in lost income and production would run to more than $12 billion," ADB said. *Martin Marfil and AP*

Pinay, Indon on Saudi death row

JAKARTA—An international rights group urged Saudi Arabia on Wednesday to spare two female housemaids, from Indonesia and the Philippines, who are on death row for allegedly killing their female employers.

Human Rights Watch said Sarah Jane Landicho Dematera of the Philippines was sentenced to death in 1993 after being forced to write and sign a dictated confession and being held incommunicado for one year.

Indonesia's Siti Zaenab binti Buhri Rupa received a death sentence in 2000. Her family was not officially notified of her arrest until two months before her trial, the New York-based group said.

"Neither woman had access to a lawyer or any other form of legal assistance, and consular officials were not present at their trials. Both women were convicted on the basis of confessions, a common feature of the kingdom's justice system," HRW said in a statement.

The group called on Saudi Arabia to halt all executions until an independent review of death penalty cases is conducted.

"Innocent people may be on death row in Saudi Arabia, facing imminent execution," said Virginia Sherry, HRW's associate director for the Middle East.

"The pattern of coerced confessions and the weight given to them in court in Saudi Arabia is well established," said Sherry.

"If information about death penalty cases is withheld from family members and others, legal assistance not provided, and trials not open, it's hard to have confidence in the verdicts."

Many Indonesians and Filipinos work in Saudi Arabia as domestic workers. *AFP*

'A soaring eagle, not a lame duck'

RATHER than a lame duck, President Macapagal-Arroyo was now a "soaring eagle," according to her chief of staff Rigoberto Tiglao.

After she announced last December that she would not be seeking a full term in 2004, it was suggested that the President would become ineffective as she would be seen as a lame duck.

"Remember last year, everyone was talking of a lame-duck President? Now I haven't heard of anybody using the term lame duck," said Tiglao as he rattled off Ms Macapagal's recent successes.

In an interview with the "Cerge for Truth" RPN 9 television program yesterday, Tiglao said the President had agreed to Malacañang's creating a study group on constitutional change because she wanted to find long-term solutions to the country's problems.

He said this was also the reason why Ms Macapagal could not reject outright the Charter change proposal being promoted by House Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr.

The study group, composed of experts and respected personalities, is headed by the President's adviser for special concerns, Norberto Gonzales.

Tiglao stressed that Charter change should not lead to an extension of the office terms of incumbent officials, including the President.

Filipinos are sensitive to proposals for term extensions, he said.

As for the ubiquitous endorsements for the President to run in 2004 despite her disavowals, he said these were a "good reflection that more and more people are starting to realize that the President is emerging as one of the [country's] strongest Presidents" despite facing numerous crises.

He said the President's programs on housing, small- and medium-enterprises and the roll-on-roll-off trans-Philippine transport scheme were having some effect and attracting favorable notice.

Asked if these could make her change her mind about 2004, Tiglao said: "She made that statement in December and I would think she would act on the basis of national interest rather than personal or any other interest." *Juliet Labog-Javellana*

Sleepless in sweatshop

From page A1

ROUEL Quitoriano tells the INQUIRER his main responsibility was to make sure no one fell asleep on the job.
ERIK ARAZAS

one fell asleep on the job.

These were the owner's specific instructions on how the diminutive supervisor (he stands barely five feet tall) could keep workers from drifting to la-la land: "The owner would tell me to get a piece of wood. So I'd bring with me a piece of wood, and I'd slam it on a table to wake everyone up. They'd all be mad at me."

It proved quite effective in making workers jump out of their skins and hunch back on their sewing machines.

When that failed to work, Quitoriano had another trick up his sleeve: a box full of Duromine capsules. Again on orders from the owner, he would make the rounds of the annex, spot the most tired workers, and offer them the drug.

Duromine, actually an appetite suppressant meant for obese people, has the interesting side effect, among others, of inducing insomnia. But Quitoriano didn't know that then. He was told that it was ascorbic acid, or Vitamin C.

Since 2001

Anvil Ensembles has been giving workers the drug since 2001, albeit not the whole year round. Duromine usually makes its way to the assembly lines in September, when orders usually start pouring in, and is shelved by December once production begins to drop.

But workers were not forced to take the drug. "Whenever you're so sleepy that you are unable to work or even keep your footing, you're offered that. It's up to you whether you take it or not," Quitoriano said.

But for many, there was hardly a choice. "You want to stay awake because they tell you that if you cannot finish your quota, you can walk out the door anytime [and never come back]," a female worker said.

Quitoriano, who worked for Anvil for five years, took Duromine himself.

"I took two capsules. Those two kept me wide awake for more than 24 hours, eating nothing but water," he told the INQUIRER.

He filed a complaint with the National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) on Oct. 9, 2002, for non-payment of overtime pay. He was dismissed from work soon after.

Working overtime under certain conditions—for example, to meet rush orders—is allowed under Philippine labor laws. But the overtime must not be forced upon the workers, a labor official said.

Forced overtime also violates the core labor standards of the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention.

No reply

The INQUIRER tried several times but failed to get Anvil to respond to the workers' allegations, the use of Duromine being only one of their complaints against the company owners.

The INQUIRER visited the factory in Rizal but was told that none of the owners was there. This paper also called the company repeatedly last week, and each time, the staff would say that the owners hadn't arrived yet.

As of press time, the company has not returned calls or answered a letter detailing the allegations against it.

Anvil Ensembles was registered as a garments maker with the Securities and Exchange Commission in February 1998. It has a paid-up capital of P31,250.

Its incorporators include Marisa M. Carlos, Margie M. Lazo, Leslie Ann Carlos, Myrna Pangan and Augusto Lazo, who serves as treasurer.

The company is a Filipino subcontractor of the US-based clothing lines Little Betty, JC Penney and Sears & Roebuck. The dresses are exported to Canada and the United States.

The firm employs 420 workers, "330 of them women," whose salaries range from P100 to P190 a day, depending on the workers' position. The daily minimum wage in the region is P237.

According to the SEC, Anvil has not filed its annual financial statement since 1998.

'Ecstasy'

When Anvil workers were first given Duromine, they were told the capsules were vitamins, or ascorbic acid. They soon experienced the side effects of the medication, and have since dubbed it "Ecstasy," in reference to the popular antidepressant drug being sold to the party crowd in high-end clubs around the country.

"You can't sleep even if you want to. You lose your appetite. You're awake, but you don't have energy," a 40-year-old female worker said.

The workers, who asked not to be named for fear of losing their jobs, said only the older ones and those who had elevated blood pressure were not offered the drug.

Recalled another female worker: "My body shook the first time I took Duromine. I felt cold and nauseated. The next time they distributed it, I did not take it.

"We worked for three days that week straight, starting Thursday. We snatched two hours of sleep a day. By Sunday, we were already zombies."

It is not clear how the company was able to procure the drug. According to workers interviewed by the INQUIRER, the company started handing out Duromine capsules still individually sealed in their original wrappers: Last year, however, supervisors began carrying bottles of the drug.

Encouraging its workers to take a regulated drug for purposes other than those prescribed by the medication is only one lament among many.

Workers tell of pregnant women being laid off, forced overtime, no Social Security System contributions, no overtime pay or night differentials, unhygienic toilets, and even verbal abuse.

"They called us idiots," one worker said. "They would tell us, 'And where will you go? You can't go abroad because you don't know how to speak English. And you are all so ugly that no one will get you in Japan, no one will get you at the Junction."

"Junction" is a crossroads in Taytay where nightclubs and videoke bars now proliferate.

Other complaints

The complaints from workers are numerous.

For two years now, Anvil has been deducting SSS contributions from the salaries of supervisors and line leaders. But when these employees checked with the SSS, they were informed that the Anvil management had only remitted contributions for less than a year, Quitoriano said.

Quitoriano started working for Anvil in March 2000, and was fired in October 2002.

But latest SSS figures retrieved from the Net showed intermittent remittances by the company. So far, Anvil still owes Quitoriano eight months of SSS contributions.

Also, water would be turned off at 11 p.m. on the dot even when workers had to work until 4 a.m. the following day, forcing them to make do with a smelly and messy latrine.

Workers in the annex said they were allowed to use the toilet only once every four hours and had to log in their names each time they did. The guard would knock on the door if they stayed inside for more than two or three minutes.

They were also not given morning and afternoon breaks.

As for safety equipment, like masks, the workers said Anvil supplied none of these. "When there is an inspection, we are asked to bring masks ourselves," a worker said.

During an inspection by a Sears & Roebuck representative on Oct. 28, 2002, the management reportedly told the workers how to answer interviewers.

But despite all these, the workers said they did not have the courage to formally charge the company before the NLRC.

Instead, on Jan. 30 some of them filed with the Department of Labor and Employment in Southern Tagalog an anonymous "request" letter detailing their grievances against Anvil. There was no mention of Duromine being distributed to workers at the factory.

But because the complaint was not made under oath, as required by DOLE standard procedure, it was not tagged for immediate action although the company was included among those that would be part of the routine inspection.

Labor violations

Two months after getting the anonymous letter, Nestor P. Metal, the DOLE senior labor inspector who was then assigned in the area, dropped in on Anvil and found that the company had indeed violated general labor standards on wages, and SSS and Pag-Ibig contributions.

"We are now working on the resolution of the case. We will require Anvil to correct the wages," he said.

But another DOLE official said it was not always advisable to force companies like Anvil to pay the standard minimum wage in the region because they may just simply close down. "As long as there is some form of increase, some movement [in the daily wages], that will do for now," the official said.

When asked about Anvil, the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) said that while the factory's case was unique, other labor violations ranging from paying below-minimum wages to unsafe labor practices was the norm in the industrial zones—Laguna, Cavite, Metro Manila, Bataan, Subic and Clark.

The TUCP, one of the biggest labor organizations in the country, is consolidating the research it conducted on companies as part of its antisweatshop campaign, a program funded by the USAID and coursed through the American Center for International Labor Solidarity.

"We conducted the study because we don't know the real situation," campaign director Cedric Bagtas told the INQUIRER. "We know labor violations are rampant, but we don't know the real figures. Now at least, we have an idea of the extent of the problem."

From September 2000 to August 2001, the TUCP's anti-sweatshop unit surveyed 202 factories, 104 of them at length.

"All of them have violations," Bagtas said.

In its report, the TUCP wrote: "In Bataan, workers producing for a famous clothing company were dismissed when the company found out they were organizing a union. When the stubborn union won recognition after a strike, the company closed without notice.

"Women workers producing a popular shoe brand still receive wages below the statutory minimum, even after four or eight years of sewing.

"In Cavite, a company producing for an electronic giant routinely does not readmit women workers who have given birth; it also does not advance or reimburse maternity benefits.

"Garment companies routinely lock fire exits allegedly to prevent pilferage, risking mass deaths or injury in case of fire or stampede."

Codes of conduct

Bagtas said his team only surveyed those companies that had corporate codes of conduct, which are unilateral declarations to respect core labor standards on issues such as compensation, environment, safety and health, workers' rights, and working conditions in their own or their subcontractors' operations.

He said there were more companies out there that had neither express commitments to labor standards nor that much money to address workers' issues, unlike most of the firms included in the survey.

Next to the National Capital Region, Southern Tagalog has the most number of manufacturing establishments in the country: 1,662 companies that employ 20 or more people and contribute some P678 billion to the economy, according to the 2000 Census of Philippine Business and Industry Manufacturing.

The region is also home to over 146,000 establishments, based on a report by the National Statistical Coordination Board three years ago. And the DOLE has 11 labor inspectors to cover them all.

No lofty demands

The workers of Anvil interviewed by the INQUIRER have no lofty demands.

They simply want management to meet the minimum wage and to go easy on them when they have to do two or three straight days without sleep. Well, they also want to wear a better-looking ID.

Even Quitoriano only wants to get his overtime pay and his SSS contributions remitted in full. He's not even interested in getting his old job back.

Nor do they bear ill will toward Anvil because, from how they recounted their experience with Duromine, it appeared that everything was a practical joke played at their expense.

Others, facing the possibility of a bleaker future without a job, are even thankful for the work.

"It's better than nothing," a 25-year-old worker said. "We don't want the factory to close down. We complain because we want the factory to change the way it treats us. We complain because we don't want new workers to experience what we have experienced."

And everyone agreed.

Litany of labor law violations

IN resolving the complaints filed against Anvil Ensembles, the Department of Labor has to determine whether the following provisions of our labor laws were followed by the company:

- Wages shall not be less than the minimum required by law;
- Additional compensation shall be paid for work performed beyond eight hours a day (overtime) or on rest days, Sundays and holidays;
- Night differential pay of not less than 10 percent of the regular wage shall be paid for every hour of work performed between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.;
- Rest period of not less than 24 consecutive hours shall be given after every six consecutive work days;
- Workers are entitled to not less than one hour time off for regular meals and, if that is not feasible, at least 20 minutes meal break on condition that the shortened period shall be considered part of working hours;
- Safe and healthful working conditions should be maintained;
- Contributions equivalent to one percent of the monthly salary of each worker shall be remitted to the Employees Compensation Commission; and
- Premium contributions by the workers and employer shall be regularly collected and remitted to the Social Security System.

Raul J. Palabrica

A drug . . .

From page A1

longs to the amphetamine (which includes the synthetic drug Ecstasy) and methamphetamine (found in shabu) families, a cocktail of chemicals that have hallucinogenic and stimulant properties.

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the central policy-making body within the United Nations, had placed phentermine among the drugs in Schedule IV of the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic (mood-altering) substances. It joins the cluster of drugs that include heroine and cannabis.

A 15-milligram capsule is sold for P23.75; a 30-mg capsule costs 38.75.

Phentermine makes the heart beat faster and raises blood pressure. Side effects include dryness of the mouth, insomnia, nervousness and constipation, according to the Martindale Complete Drug Reference manual, 32nd edition.

Workers of Anvil who have taken Duromine and were not aware of what has been written about the drug said they did lose sleep, were constantly thirsty and bothered by the shakes.

They also told of one worker who suffered stomach cramps all day.

Pulmonary hypertension has been reported in patients taking Duromine and vascular heart defects among those who combined the drug with fenfluramine, another antiobesity drug, the manual said.

According to the Consumer Medical Information, Duromine must not be taken by people who have very high blood pressure, heart disease, a disease of the blood vessels in the brain, a narrowing of the blood vessels, an overactive thyroid gland or glaucoma. *Rommel Lalata, Libre and Luige del Puerto, Metro*

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OPINION

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EDITORIALS

Sorry casualties

FOR the fourth day, the military found itself at the losing end of the insurgency when communist rebels in the Compostela Valley in Mindanao killed 13 soldiers last Monday. Just over the weekend, the rebels overran and burned a military camp in Eastern Samar.

The Mindanao attacks flew in the face of the order of President Macapagal-Arroyo for a "swift and forcible action" against the New People's Army as a result of the Samar incident. The rebels seemed to be taunting the President, making her eat her words and exposing the emptiness of her bombast.

In fact, the Mindanao attack came less than two days after Mayor Joel Brillantes of Monkayo in Davao was gunned down by a suspected rebel inside a cockpit. Moreover, the attack on the Eastern Samar military camp coincided with the NPA assassination of Mayor Guerrero Zaragoza of Tayug, Pangasinan.

The incidents build up to a disturbing pattern of a more aggressive NPA. First, the communist rebels seem on a renewed offensive nationwide, as shown by the geographic consistency of the attacks in the three major island groups. Second, the rebels have radically revised their guerrilla tactics, massing large troops to pounce on undermanned camps and detachments. Third, the NPA seems to complement the large-scale military with assassinations and ambushes of civilian targets, providing an ambience of all-out war and hostilities.

The attacks are worrisome because they appear to belie the military contention that the rebels are a spent force. Communism may be a spent ideology, its resilience in the Philippines the mere result of an artificial push by someone or something trying to stake a claim to being the fourth pillar of the world communist movement. But there should be cause for concern if a presumably bankrupt ideology can still pack a military wallop that can leave scores dead and public safety and peace tenuous.

But in its battle with the communists, the government itself is saddled with a warped ideology—the ideology of anti-terrorism. By smearing the NPA in a diplomatic offensive and having it labeled as a terrorist, it has merely obscured the trenchancy of the communist movement under a rhetorical fig leaf. Not able to deal with the NPA in a more creative fashion, it has wished it away by a semantic hocus-pocus.

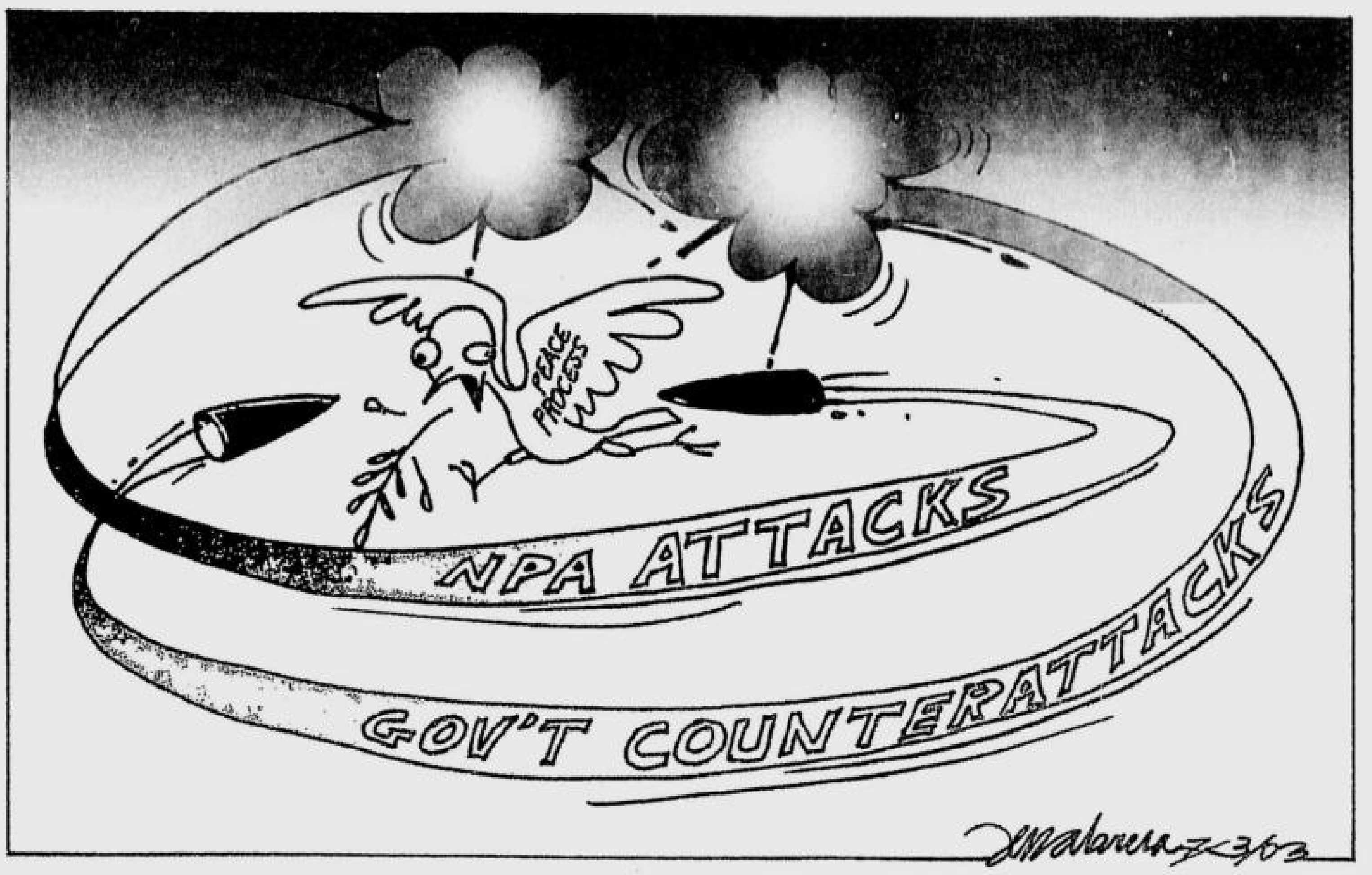
Why does communism survive despite its alleged ideological bankruptcy and its military marginalization? It survives and thrives in the quagmire of widespread poverty and social disenfranchisement, in a countryside where gross iniquity and government neglect persist. President Macapagal, whose father was the only Philippine president to have truly come from the ranks of the poor and who introduced the first land reform law, should know this. But alas, in the presence of hawks in her military, she seems forgetful of the wisdom and legacy of her father.

Commendable cops

IT may be that military victories have come few and far between, but the government should take comfort in that at least in Quinapondan, Eastern Samar, two policemen, severely outnumbered and poorly armed, stood their ground and repulsed the attack of 20 heavily armed rebels. The rebels seemed to have miscalculated on this one. Or else they had forgotten their own cherished Marxist belief: that however outnumbered, with the proper vision and drive, cadres can change the world.

Indeed, Police Insp. Cayetano Gannaban and PO1 Alexander Villaflor disproved to the military that the PNP could not be equal to the task of taming the insurgency, now relegated into a mere public safety concern, at least in the national security order of priorities. The two policemen displayed the grit, determination and creativity that should stave off the advance of the insurgency threat. Despite being armed only with a .38 caliber revolver and an M-14 Armalite, they drove away the attackers by a combination of ammunition and ruse. Gannaban sustained a wound in the right shoulder as a result.

But even policemen, who conduct community relations every day, know that no armory or deception can lick the insurgency problem. Conscientious and upright, they would find pitting wits and bullets with fellow Filipinos, whatever their ideological color, an unsavory business, indeed. Like anyone, they would rather wish that the government stopped looking at the communists as enemies and terrorists, but as potential partners for peace and development.



Gov't takes from the poor to give to the rich

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

THE GOVERNMENT must really be scraping the bottom of the treasury barrel. The Bureau of Internal Revenue is now going to collect income tax from the small *tianggeros* even before they earn any income. Yes, the BIR wants to collect taxes on income that is not yet earned.

The *tianggeros* are the small traders selling cheap goods in the *tiangges* or flea markets. They live a hand-to-mouth existence. They have to shell out P30,000 before they even sell one item or earn a single centavo. They have to pay the P30,000 rent for the stall in advance. This is usually money borrowed at usurious interest rates, since how many *tianggeros* can spare P30,000?

On top of that, the BIR wants to collect P500 from each of them as advance income tax payment, chargeable to their final income taxes to be filed at the end of the year. They will have to borrow that amount, too, with interest.

The BIR is, in effect, borrowing the *tianggeros'* money. But it is not going to pay any interest for the "borrowed" amount. In effect, the BIR is making the *tianggeros* pay the interest for the money the BIR borrowed. How unfair can you get?

* * *

In contrast, the BIR is giving billions of pesos in tax refunds to big taxpayers, at the same time that it is squeezing the small ones. Meralco has just asked the BIR for a P7-billion tax refund. And like a fool, the BIR is giving due course to the demand. The Supreme Court had ordered Meralco to refund the P2 billion it had overcharged and collected from its customers, so it is asking P7 billion as a refund from the government. Where can you find a better deal than that?

Why is the government running out of money? Simple. It has a new policy, like that of Robin Hood in reverse: Take from the poor to give to the rich.

While squeezing the poor taxpayers of every centavo it can get, it refunds billions of pesos in taxes already paid to the big boys. And, believe it or not, even to those who did not pay any taxes at all.

Spurious tax credit certificates, secured in connivance with corrupt government officials, some in the names of non-existent companies, are sold to the biggest income earners like oil companies. They then use the spurious tax credit certificates to pay their own taxes. The government, therefore, is defrauded twice.

This scam was discovered many years ago and charges have been filed, but they allowed the biggest suspect of them all to escape although he was already caught here.

Until now, however, not one of the many accused, including government officials, has been convicted. The trials of many have not even started yet. They are still free to enjoy the fruits of their dishonesty while the government scrounges around for money from the small taxpayers.

Because our government is teaching criminals that crime pays, and because it has not learned a lesson from the first tax credit scam, another group has perpetrated another tax credit scam, using the same modus operandi of the first.

To top it all, whatever taxes are really collected are stolen by personnel of the BIR themselves. They deposit the tax money in bank accounts under fictitious names and then withdraw the money for themselves. This has been done not only once but many times, the one at the Land Bank branch in Binangonan, Rizal, being only the latest discovered. Who knows how many other similar accounts lie undiscovered in other bank branches?

Charges have been filed against BIR and bank personnel, but until now, many, many years after the first case was discovered, only one has been convicted. When she comes out of prison, millions of pesos of her share may be waiting for her. Other suspects are already enjoying their loot abroad.

* * *

Another proof that in the Philippines crime pays is that the perpetrators of numerous high-profile pyramid scams are still free, in spite of the billions of pesos they have bilked from gullible investors. The first pyramid scam was discovered decades ago and the mastermind was sent to prison, although I doubt if the investors ever got all their money back. But government agencies, notably the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Department of Finance and Congress, have not learned their lessons.

They could have passed legislation and rules to prevent a repetition of the scam. No such thing was done. And because it is such an easy and lucrative, though criminal, undertaking, more pyramid scams sprouted under the very noses of the government. Nobody made any move until billions of pesos had been stolen from tens of thousands of victims.

When will we ever learn?

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE:

Teacher : Give the importance of "period."

Pupil: When my sister missed her "period," my mother fainted, my father had a stroke, and our priest shot himself.

Vows

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

I REMEMBER again the story told to me by a priest from Catanduanes during a wedding where I stood as a sponsor. Catanduanes, he said, used to be the seminary capital of the country. It produced the most number of recruits for the priesthood, for many reasons. Not least of them, it gave poor kids a good education and a high status in the community. Bicol generally was a devoutly Catholic place, which was also to say it was not a very catholic one.

Things changed abruptly in the middle '90s. The number of seminarians dropped abruptly and then fell to a trickle. No amount of exhortation, blandishment or cajoling drew in the usual crowd at the gates. Church authorities were alarmed and set about trying to understand the phenomenon. After interviewing people and correlating various factors, they were faced with only one logical explanation: The youth of Catanduanes had become reluctant to enter the seminary because of the introduction of cable TV to the island!

Believe that as you like, and take of it what you will. My informant was probably pulling my leg a little. But it does say a great deal about the dilemma facing the Church today. Pope John Paul II just ruled the other day that the priestly vow of celibacy stays. He isn't going to rescind it notwithstanding the thinning out of priestly ranks and casting out of priestly robes, the latter in more ways than one. Priests may not marry or have sex, whichever comes first, or last. From where we stand, that seems a little like trying to halt the advance of cable TV in Catanduanes.

There is something to be said for the argument that some of the current sex scandals rocking the Church owe to the vow of celibacy. I say some because I do not agree that all the scandals owe to it. Sexual harassment and rape certainly do not. They owe to something else—to a mentality given to the abuse of power. You do not have to make a vow of celibacy to be accused of the crime of sexual harassment and, more heinously, of rape. But you do have to make a vow of celibacy to be accused of the crime of falling in love, and more heinously, of marrying.

This is the age of the "secular city," to borrow a phrase used by Harvey Cox way back in the 1960s. Priests who go out to engage that world are not going to come out of it unscathed. The 2000s may not be as permissive as the 1960s—this is the age of AIDS and SARS as compared to the age of Woodstock and free love—but it offers no small garden of earthly delights, to borrow as well a title from Hieronymous Bosch's famous painting.

But I would argue that the lack of realism in priestly celibacy goes beyond specific times and climes. The problem is not sociological, it is existential. The inability of priests to stick to that vow was already there during Rizal's time, and far more humongously. That is the scientific explanation for the friars' contention that the offspring of indio women were fair-complexioned because they were blessed by God. Rizal's time may hardly be called permissive. That must suggest that the problem afflicts, indeed pervades, both liberal and repressive times.

Rizal, not quite incidentally, had some pretty rich things to say about it. At his satirical best in the essay "Reflections on the Philippines and the Filipinos," he "defends" the friars in this way: "They say the friars have many women and paramours, that they do not respect married women, widows or maidens. I have my private opinion. I say if one can have two, three, or four women, why should he not have them? Women are to blame. Besides, there is something good about the curate. He does not let his paramours die of hunger, as many men do, but supports them, dresses them well, protects their families, and leaves a good bequest to his daughters or nieces. And if there is any sin in it, he will absolve them at once, and without great penance. Frankly speaking, if I were a woman, and if I had to prostitute myself, I would do it with a curate."

Rizal also had some interesting things to say about nuns: "Why should an indio guard his daughter carefully if she is not going to be a nun? And even if she had to be a nun, do not certain rumors somewhere say the nuns of St. Claire and the Franciscan friars understand each other very well? What is bad about that? Are not the nuns the wives of Jesus Christ? Are not the friars his successors?"

What makes celibacy an even more unrealistic requirement is that priests are compelled to "go out into the world" by the nature of their calling. Pope John Paul II himself argues so. The distinguishing feature of Christianity compared to the other great religions, he says in his book, "Crossing the Threshold of Hope," is its strong secular dimension. It follows from Christ being both God and man. The Church is human and divine, temporal and spiritual, as much concerned with worldly matters as otherworldly ones. With the exception of monks and ascetics, priests are not expected to remove themselves from the world, they are expected to embrace it. I don't know why the embracing can't be in more ways than one.

Pope John Paul II's argument for priestly celibacy is that it helps priests give undivided attention to God and their flock. But if the experience of this country says anything, it does the very opposite. It merely encourages double standards, or downright hypocrisy. Of doing in private what one reviles in public. Of keeping lovers or mistresses while wearing a halo of holiness. It divides the "fallen" priests' attention between writing licit sermons and illicit love missives. Or between tending to the needs of their flock and their own. That is not undivided, that is positively schizophrenic.

Some vows are made to be broken, some not made at all.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@info.com.ph

Peace within the year a 'good possibility'—JDV

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SPEAKER Jose de Venecia's older brother, Gil, 72, recently passed away in Pangasinan and I condoled with him over the phone in Berlin. The Speaker said his brother was the farmer in the family.

JDV proceeded to Berlin with his group that included Tarlac Gov. Jose Yap, Presidential Adviser Norberto Gonzales and government negotiator Silvestre Bello, after meeting with NDF leaders Jose Ma. Sison and Luis Jalandoni in Amsterdam. He said the NDF leaders had agreed to put an end to the suspension of the peace talks, and that these will resume in Oslo toward the end of this month. He stressed that there is a "good possibility" that the peace agreement with the NDF and the MILF would be completed within the year, which, of course, would be a boon for the Macapagal administration.

* * *

I told JDV that we all hope so, considering that even more radical groups, such as the militant Palestinian group Hamas, are now shaking hands with Israeli leaders and are seemingly determined to end 33 months of continued violence in their common territory. One also thinks of the Tamil Tigers, the Maoist militants in Nepal and the radicals in Northern Ireland and in Sumatra, who now all seem inclined to give peace a chance. JDV said his idea of a Christian-Muslim dialogue, which he proposed to US President Bush in Washington last month, was formally adopted by the Christian Democrat International at its meeting in Portugal.

* * *

After groping with an anti-drug approach that would never have worked because it would have too many quarreling superstars, the Palace has finally evolved a good workable arrangement. Under RA 9165, the Anti-Drug Act of 2002, the chief policy-making body is the Dangerous Drugs Board, chaired by Interior Secretary Jose Lina, while the sole law enforcer is the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) under its chief Anselmo Avenido. To enhance the capability of the PDEA, which is still in its formative stage, the President issued EO 206 creating the Anti-Illegal Drug Special Operations Task Force, headed by PNP Deputy Director General Edgar Aglipay. Under this arrangement no other unit can carry out raids on drug establishments, which is good as it will now be easier to pinpoint responsibility for the anti-drug campaign, including the destruction of seized drug hauls.

* * *

I queried Aglipay about a recent news item quoting him as batting for the creation of special drug courts. In a brief conversation, he explained that 25 percent of cases filed in our courts are drug cases, while the other 75 percent involve drug-related cases such as murder and rape. Aglipay said there is need for special drug courts inasmuch as people arrested by the police and other agencies are often able to get off the hook because of technicalities, to the great demoralization of apprehending authorities. For instance, some judges insist that only the PDEA can make arrests, although EO 206 has opened this function to the task force. He stressed that judges have to be knowledgeable about the law.

One good thing about these special drug courts is that the judges and prosecutors will be closely guarded by the NGOs. These courts have to be created by legislation, but in the meantime, the government's serious intention to lick the drug menace may be gleaned from the fact that 26 courts around the country have already been tasked to handle drug cases, in addition to their regular load. But it would be better if Congress works for the creation of special drug courts.

* * *

With the death of Bacolod Bishop Antonio Fortich, who retired some years back, a legend has passed. In the hot days of insurgency in Negros, Fortich earned the moniker "Kumander Fortich" owing to his rapport with the NPA, to the point where the military regarded him with suspicion for some time. The prelate became quite controversial because of his strong stand on human rights and against rampant military abuses in earlier years.

Negros Rep. Apolinario Lozada, chair of the House foreign relations committee, said: "It is with deepest feeling of loss that I mourn the death of Bishop Emeritus Antonio Y. Fortich. I have had very good relations with him in his lifetime, both as my pastor and my spiritual counselor. Bishop Fortich has left Negros a legacy of stronger faith in God and corresponding strong confidence in each and everyone of us, to face our problems economically and politically. He opened our eyes to the realities of life, i.e. that we have to be true to our respective responsibilities and to the service of Negros. Now that he's gone, Negros will never be the same again."

* * *

My family, the Olivares clan, boasts of a number of people involved in related arts such as painting, interior-designing and writing. Last month my United Kingdom-based niece Ivee Olivares-Mellor made her first solo exhibit here, while another niece, New York-trained interior designer Maja Olivares-Co, daughter of well-known interior designer Sonia Santiago Olivares, recently won an award for her lights entry in a prestigious international design contest. Now a nephew, UP-trained painter John Olivares, a faculty member of the FEU Institute of Architecture and Fine Arts, and his wife, graphic artist and painter Medge Samblaceno-Olivares, will be conducting an art workshop every Saturday starting July 12 to Aug. 30 at OZ Café, located at UP's Bahay Alumni in Diliman from 3 to 5 p.m. The personalized workshop will be divided into two categories: basic drawing and painting for students 13 and above, and oil painting techniques for students 13 and above, who must already be adept with basic drawing techniques. The fee is P4,000 for eight sessions. For inquiries call John Olivares at the Earth Tribe Council Secretariat, tel. 931-3937 or Oz Café, 434-7456.

Dumb and dumberer

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

DURING one of the skirmishes in the ongoing battles between the anti-choice and the reproductive rights camps, the anti-choice groups came out with documents purporting to reveal "scientific" studies on the so-called "abortifacient" effects of modern contraceptives. One assertion was even prefaced: "According to The New York Times...," thereby clothing the statement with some objective credibility as it was supposedly reported by the United States' "newspaper of record."

When reproductive rights groups investigated the assertions made in those documents, they discovered that the statement supposedly made by The New York Times, while it did appear in that prestigious publication, was contained in a "letter to the editor" authored by a US-based anti-choice group. They were in effect quoting themselves! But borrowing The New York Times' "honor" dishonorably.

You must thus forgive me if I tend to take "scientific" and supposedly "authoritative" statements made or quoted by anti-choice groups with not just a grain of salt but a grunt of skepticism. More often than not, they're the fruit not just of bad medicine and faulty logic, but of bad journalism and mental dishonesty clothed in the robes of self-righteousness.

Last month, an article came out in this paper (and in this space, unfortunately) purporting to discuss the health risks associated with the use of modern contraceptives, including a supposed link between contraceptives, abortion and breast cancer.

The writer of the piece referred to what he claimed were "historical studies that (contraception) is a menace to over-all human health," even citing recent studies from seemingly credible sources, including the World Health Organization. That early in the article (it was in the lead paragraph), I knew something was fishy. The oral contraceptive pill has been in use by millions of women around the world for 40 years now and if indeed there have been "historical" studies about it being a "menace" to the health of women, you'd think we'd have heard of it by now, or governments would have banned them by now. But they haven't, no matter how fervently fundamentalist groups have tried to pressure governments.

* * *

MY suspicions are confirmed by a letter signed by Dr. Mario Festin, a professor of obstetrics and gynecology and clinical epidemiology at the UP College of Medicine, and a member of the Philippines Evidence-Based Reproductive Medi-cine Network (EBRM-Net).

In his letter, Dr. Festin chides the writer for presenting "misinterpreted" and quoting out-of-context "evidence" to support his opinion, and thereby "misleading readers on the safety and effectiveness of various methods of family planning."

"A study published in the June 2002 issue of the New England Journal of Medicine (one of the most prestigious journals in the medical community) concluded that there is no significant increase in the risk of breast cancer among women between ages 35-64 who currently use or previously used oral contraceptives, particularly the newer generation types of contraceptives that are now prevalent in the Philippines," writes Dr. Festin. "The study further showed that an increased risk of breast cancer was not associated with the oral contraceptive used by women with a family history of breast cancer or with initiating oral contraceptive use at a young age. This study confirmed the findings of the 1986 CASH (Cancer and Steroid Hormone) study, which showed no link between oral contraceptive use and breast cancer." (This same study, by the way, was also quoted in the article in question.)

* * *

THE ARTICLE also mentions the assertion of Dr. Joel Brind of the City University of New York in "a recent 2003 workshop on breast cancer" linking induced abortion to breast cancer risk.

To this Festin says, "[N]owhere in the medical literature is there any evidence that oral contraceptives induce abortion, so the attempt to link oral contraceptive use, abortion and increased breast cancer risk is patently illogical. The Brind work (cited) does not contain any mention of oral contraceptives."

Who, you might ask, is Dr. Joel Brind? He's a well-known figure among the anti-choice groups in the United States, who, with the backing of his supporters, has hounded the US Congress into investigating, time and again, his assertions. Recently, US health authorities convened yet another huge gathering of the best scientific and medical minds to examine the data and they concluded that there was no definitive link between abortion and breast cancer. So while Brind may have made known his "findings" in the workshop, the article fails to mention that they were roundly repudiated.

In his letter, Dr. Festin concludes that "there is overwhelming medical evidence that modern contraceptive methods such as oral contraceptive pills and DMPA (Depo Provera) can provide safe and effective family planning for most couples. As the WHO has concluded, the health benefits far exceed the health risks."

He has a parting shot for people like the writer of the article who cite "scientific" evidence they happen to agree with without bothering to check their veracity:

"Reading medical literature today requires using proper critical appraisal skills to look at the validity and potential use of the findings of the published articles. Evidence from the medical literature should be presented in its proper context. Presenting medical information out of context to suit particular agendas will always be subject to question and can be challenged by those who can cite the latest and best evidence."

If the person making a faulty assertion is dumb, then the one who quotes that person to argue his case is, in the words of the movie, "dumberer."

Madeleine

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

TODAY I was going to write about Mordechai Vanunu (know him?), but I thought that could wait for next week. A voice was nudging me to give way to a woman's cry of pain, plea for justice and struggle to break free. I must admit though that I have reasons to fear for my life.

But here she is, speaking for herself through a letter she recently wrote to Speaker Jose de Venecia in an attempt to get things back on the path of justice. Listen to her:

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I write to you being my "Ninong" at my wedding with Mayor Emmanuel Alfelor of Iriga City. I write to you to seek justice for the three murder victims of my husband's crime. I write to you to seek assistance that justice is done in this case.

I am Madeleine Blanche Tosoc-Alfelor, a battered and sexually abused wife for 22 years. I am also a witness to the multiple murders committed by my husband and his cohorts on 04 Dec, 2002. Presently, I am under the Witness Protection Program (WPP) of the Department of Justice (DOJ).

On 20 Feb. 2003, after more than two months in hiding, I finally found the courage to file with the Quezon City Regional Trial Court, Branch 86, a petition for annulment of my marriage to Mayor Alfelor, wherein I stated, among others, my husband's masterminding the killing of Reynaldo Licup, Geofrey Remodo and Rommel Barrelos, in conspiracy with his city administrator, Atty. Aldo Turiano, his PNP security-detailed officers and several other cohorts. Copy of the Petition for Annulment, together with its annexes; is herewith attached as Annex A.

Soon thereafter, the NBI filed a multiple murder case with the Department of Justice against my husband and his conspirators. Said case is still pending at the said department for preliminary investigation. Please see copy of the NBI complaint and its annexes hereto marked as Annex B.

I do not intend to go back to Mayor Alfelor anymore. Enough is enough! For 22 years, I have suffered too much pain already, emotionally and physically. He has killed a number of people just out of his perennial, mindless, unprovoked and unfounded jealous fits. Unfortunately, these past murders remain unresolved until now!

Justice Undersecretary Jose Calida of the DOJ Action Center had shown his genuine concern and sincerity to assist the three widows of my husband's victims and me. His real concern is that justice be obtained by the families of my husband's victims. Unfortunately, however, I learned that several congressmen, including Rep. Nansing Alfelor, my husband's brother, and even you, Ninong, had made several calls to Usec. Calida and several DOJ and NBI officials in behalf of Mayor Alfelor, with obvious intentions to intervene and secure a resolution favorable to him and his conspirators.

Presently, my parents and brothers, the victims' families, their witnesses, their FLAG lawyers, Luis Mario General and Mirardo Obias, and I are all in hiding for fear for our lives, while, ironically, my husband, his goons and his killers are still free to continuously harass and intimidate us. Even my own lady lawyers from the WomenLead Foundation Inc. are also in danger and some officers of Gabriela, the NGO helping us in this case. In fact, my husband and Atty. Turiano already placed bounties on our heads from the day the case against them was filed by the NBI.

I know your sense of justice and I am sure that you will never tolerate that crimes remain unsolved and the perpetrators are unpunished and free. But, Ninong, I know my husband very well. He will not stop until he and his men are all free from any criminal liability. He has done it before, killing and harassing complainants, witnesses and some members of their families, just to be able to obstruct the filing of criminal charges against him and his men...

It is for this reason that I am most respectfully and urgently appealing to you, Ninong, to help us seek justice by asking your fellow congressmen to stop pressuring DOJ and NBI officials, and let the normal process of investigation be observed and the case be heard on the merit without any outside influence or pressures from any party. This is the only appeal we are seeking from you, no more no less...Thank you...

Very respectfully yours,
Madeleine Blanche Tosoc-Alfelor

Madeleine and her lawyers called for a press conference last week to air their apprehensions. And they came prepared—with facts on the case, a chronology of events, etc. neatly bound for a reader to easily understand.

Madeleine's case as a battered wife landed in the media some months ago when, for the first time, she gave harrowing details about her married life from the time her husband allegedly "raped and abducted" her at the age of 15 until after seven children later when she decided she had enough of being "raped, beaten, a mere political décor and propaganda tool."

She is now 38; he is 53.

Here's one for television's "Maalaala Mo Kaya" or "Magpakailanman" for women and men to learn from—if you are brave enough. The cases are still pending, of course. Remember, there are three cases here: the declaration of nullity now at the QC RTC, the multiple murder case at the DOJ and the administrative case against Alfelor and the city administrator just filed with the state prosecutor.

I have interviewed a number of battered women whose stories could turn you murderous, but Madeleine's is one for the books.

Mayor Alfelor, I really would like to interview you, too, you know. To pick your brains and look into your soul, à la Agent Starling. No offense meant. No one is beyond redemption, I know. But I'm deathly scared.

* * *

Send comments to crespd@info.com.ph

So young, so corrupt

YOUNG BLOOD

Zvach

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

THE YEAR was 1993. The boy was on top of the world. He was the talk of his town. He had just graduated as high school valedictorian, receiving seven medals for excellence in different fields. He had scored 99 percent in the National College Entrance Examination and passed the highly competitive University of the Philippines College Admission Test. Everyone said he would go places.

Ten years later, the boy now grown into a man, remains an undergraduate. He is desperately looking for a job. With very little savings, he cannot go places. Not for now, anyway.

That man is me. The culprit? Is it me or is it politics? Can I hold my brief stint in politics responsible for who I am today?

It was summer of 1996 when I decided to take a much needed vacation in our province. It was also the year of the Sangguniang Kabataan elections.

Who would have thought that I would enter the political arena? I was not even registered. I had no political base to speak of. But a friend challenged me to run for SK chair in our barangay. When a new voters' registration was announced, I registered.

Winning the barangay election was easy; I ran unopposed. The difficult part was wooing other SK chairpersons to vote for me as the SK Federation president.

I had no *padrino*. My two opponents were supported by the mayor or some councilors and other politicians. I had no funds; my family is not even middle class.

But several friends were willing to help. We planned all our moves up to the tiniest details. We took to the campaign trail like we were going on a picnic. It was all for fun. I had no illusions about winning. I had not been to our town for three years. I was the city boy who wanted to serve the *masa*.

The day I entered politics was the start of my transformation. I was made to sing. I shook hands with everyone. I learned to drink. I learned to dance, to smile, to impress other people. In short, I quickly developed into a traditional politician.

I suppose that the UP spirit helped me. I convinced the majority of the SK chairpersons about my sincerity and my desire to use my UP education to help design and formulate a comprehensive youth development plan for our town.

A few days before the big day, some local officials, perhaps sensing my popularity, switched their support to me. But not the mayor. On the day of the election, he went to our house and asked me to withdraw. I turned him down, and the SK chairpersons cast their votes for me and my party, which won all the seats in the SK Federation.

As SK Federation president, I was entitled to a seat in the municipal council with the same rank and privileges as councilors. The rank and the privileges changed my life.

People started addressing me as "*Konsehal*." And the money was good.

For the next five years, I was with the opposition in the council. Although the mayor had a lot of discretion in disbursing funds, I did not seek any assistance from him. The SK Federation raised funds to finance our projects.

My conflict with the mayor was the reason I stopped my studies. He was encouraging some of the SK chairpersons to oust me and elect a new president. I had to guard my flanks and I could not do so while staying in Manila for most of the week.

That changed me completely. When I was in UP, I was full of idealism and dreams for the youth of our town. I did not want people to brand me a *trapo*. But in my position, I could not preserve the loyalty of my leaders without acting like the *trapo* that I detested.

I learned that in local politics, the best plans and projects matter little. What matters most is your presence. You have to be with your followers every day to socialize with them, drink with them, eat with them, and help them with their personal needs like rice, medicine, gin or cigarettes. I had another problem. Being with the opposition, I could not get funds for my projects from the mayor. At first I used my salary to finance my projects. But then I had a family to help, I had my personal expenses and I had to pay the salaries of my staff. With my meager resources, I could not take care of all these things. So I decided to accept bribes from the *jueteng* operator.

I can still remember the day I stood up during our council meeting to denounce the illegal numbers game. I challenged the other shocked councilors to prove that they were not on the take by stopping *jueteng* that very day.

That very same day, the "envelope" found its way to our house. The man who came to deliver it said I could expect to get it on a weekly basis. And I nodded in assent.

So from 1998 until my term ended in 2002, I received a regular payola from the *jueteng* operator, plus a bonus for Christmas. There were times when I even saw the operator to ask for an increase.

That was my introduction to corruption. Before long, I made peace with the mayor and joined the majority party. And soon I was taking part in the over-pricing of contracts and the rigging of biddings. If there was a pie to be divided, I always had my share of it.

And conscience be damned. I was paying for half of our household's expenses. I had cousins who were studying in college. I was sponsoring the education of some poor but deserving students. I had a staff to maintain. I had many friends to keep. And I had many vices to sustain.

I was in bars every night with my friends who wanted to be entertained in private VIP rooms. I became an alcoholic. And I learned to use drugs.

The youth leader who was supposed to be a role model for the youth had become their No. 1 corrupter.

Not even the threat of the local communist leader could stop me. Despite my vices, I was considered to be *makamasa*. The people loved me. I catered to all their needs. I was approachable. I was one of them.

Then one day in August last year, our term ended. And all that I had done came flooding over me. I realized that I was 26, without a college degree, with very little savings and a lot of unrealized dreams.

Now I am back in Manila, looking for a job.

I still keep in touch with the politicians in our town. In fact, they are encouraging me to run for public office next year. I suppose they still think I have great potentials. They know I have served the youth well with my projects and programs, despite my problems.

But I need first to heal my soul. I have promised myself that before I enter the snake pit called politics again, I should be strong enough to resist the temptations that come with the office. Our people deserve better.

I have been a politician. I have been corrupt. And that will haunt me forever.

Zvach, 27, says he won't run in 2004 even if the two political parties in their town are inviting him to join their slate.

Is closure of Avenida legal?

CARRIEDO Street in Quiapo has been closed to vehicular traffic for some years now on orders of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza. This was done without a council ordinance or a public hearing as required by law.

Recently, Rizal Avenue was closed to vehicular traffic. The City Council just passed a resolution authorizing the closure for a period of 60 days.

However, Avenida is a national road and its closure cannot just be ordered by any local government outright.

Besides, as I told some of the minority councilors, we know this will not be a temporary measure. The mayor plans to develop the area solely for pedestrian traffic. This was reported in the Inquirer around two weeks ago, complete with an artist's perspective.

It is not true that said area is a traffic bottleneck. In fact, traffic there is not heavy. However, Atienza is now making life difficult for commuters.

We hope somebody will do something about this. The mayor apparently thinks he can get away with anything and no one can stop him.

Actually all his projects for Manila are "aesthetic" and superficial. He does not address the real problems of the city like drugs, squatting, garbage, crime.

I also really hope something can be done to clear Estero de Quiapo. It is now full of squatters, which we know will be useful for politicians during the coming elections.

—TINA TESTA,
San Sebastian Street,
Quiapo, Manila

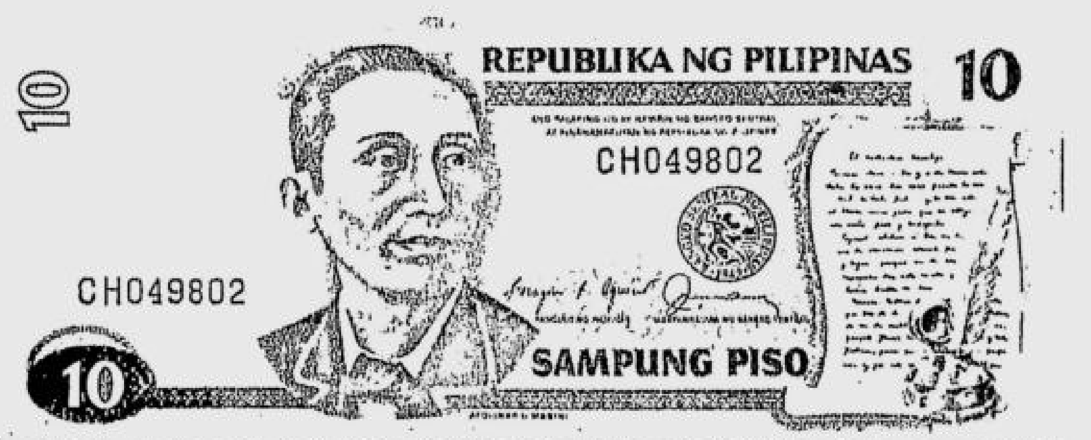
* * *

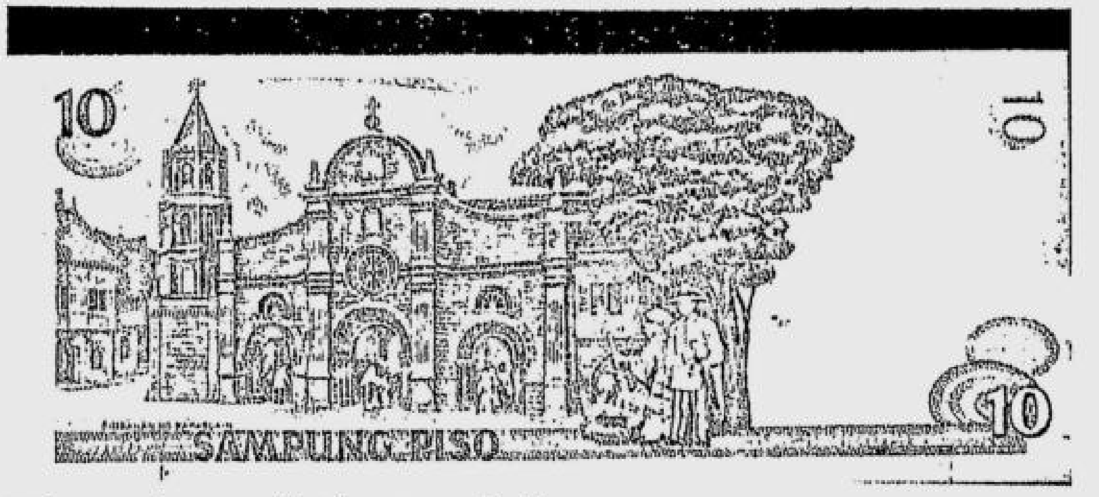
WE are happy about the ongoing beautification program along Avenida-Recto. However, we are dismayed that the south-bound traffic along that area has been rerouted to Tomas Mapua Street—a bottleneck in the area. Imagine channeling all of Recto"s traffic to this two-lane and sometimes one-lane road. It has prolonged our travel time to such an extent that going three or four blocks now takes around 15 minutes.

Is this rerouting a permanent thing? We hope this is only temporary and quick, for Tomas Mapua Street and the businesses there may soon be gasping for breath (and not just from the pollution).

Anyway, isn't it more appropriate to build cafés and stores in the (minor) streets perpendicular to Avenida?

—R. CION-CHUA,
kacc96@i-manila.com.ph





Sharing a tale of heroism

WE are very grateful that the Inquirer shared the tale of heroism of Chief Insp. Cayetano Gannaban and PO1 Raul Graza of the Quinapondan Police in Eastern Samar with the rest of the country.

The Inquirer's first-hand account of the successful defense of the Quinapondan town hall by the two brave policemen against an overwhelming enemy force is a needed recognition of one of the many other similar stories of courage and sacrifice by the men and women of the Philippine National Police. We all deserve the morale boost.

Rest assured that the PNP will never run out of heroes and proud stories to share.

Again, our most profound thanks and best regards.

—HERMOGENES E. EBDANE JR.
police director general
and chief, Philippine National
Police, PNP National
Headquarters, Camp Crame,
Quezon City

What a layer of paint can do

WHY not paint those rows of squatters' houses along South Luzon Expressway with bright colored paint to minimize the negative impression this window on poverty in Metro Manila gives to tourists?

Tourists remember the rusty and cheap construction materials used, creating the notion that Filipinos live in boxes and cartons. Imagine peach, yellow, blue, fuchsia, green, orange, lilac etc. colored houses. Painting supervision and implementation can be done by the Metro Manila Development Authority or the Department of Tourism, paint provided by the cities and municipalities where those houses are located or by the PCSO and Pagcor. Who knows, this could be a tourist attraction yet.

—ANTONIO Z. LUNA,
Poblacion, Rosario, Batangas

Mastura deserves appointment as Supreme Court justice

I WOULD like to join F. Sionil Jose in endorsing Michael Mastura to fill up the vacancy in the Supreme Court. It is but fair that our brother Muslims should at least have one justice in the highest court of the land.

Mastura is a scholar and a former representative. As Jose has pointed out, Mastura is also a scholar and a writer who is known in the Southeast Asian region as well as an expert in Sharia law.

We need more distinguished and prestigious Muslims in important positions of our government.

We hope and pray President Macapagal-Arroyo will seriously consider Michael Mastura.

—NAPOLEON V. ABUEVA,
National Artist

Light up the future, not cigarettes

WE strongly support the Anti-Tobacco Law. It will not only give us cleaner air and good health, but most important, a bright future by saving our youth from the clutches of vice and death.

We hope that the 3.1 million young Filipino smokers will be transformed from being pollutants into a productive force for the country's growth and welfare.

As we put out the cigarette, we light up the future.

So let us light up the future—not the cigarettes!

—RICHARD ALVIN M. NALUPTA,
commissioner at large,
National Youth Commission,
3/F Filomena Bldg.,
Malacañang, Manila

Sinning priests are nothing new

IN THE 1930s, the parish priest in my hometown whose catechism class I used to attend was said to have sired children during his five years stay. Yet, the Catholic Church was not rocked by a sex scandal. The priest sought a transfer of assignment, leaving behind his children.

Some time in February 1942, I was asked to stand as *ninong* to a dying baby boy whose father was my good friend. I acceded to the request in the belief that the infant would be saved from sure death by baptism. We arrived at the Catholic church of a nearby town at about 10 a.m. and waited until 12 noon, only to find out that the parish priest was with his mistress. We decided to bring the child to the Catholic church in my hometown and he was finally baptized after so many arguments. Despite the fact that the priest could not attend to his duties due to his womanizing, no sex scandal rocked the Catholic Church.

In 1949, my aunt's stepson who was a priest had two children staying with us in our house while I was studying at the Ateneo de Naga High School. But I heard no complaint against the priest or cries of harassment although he was making advances to a young *colegiala* inside the room adjacent to mine, a beautiful young lady who happened to be the half-sister of his children.

When I got married in 1951, the officiating priest had several children by a woman living with him in the convent. The parishioners said that whenever the bishop came visiting, the priest would just send his family to a neighboring town. Yet, I heard no howls of protest against that priest.

I did not mention the names of these priests since they are all dead. But the point is that the sex scandals in the Catholic Church involving no less than Bishop Crisostomo Yalung and Bishop Teodoro Bacani are not new. Thus, they should not be blown out of proportion.

Priests are but humans and they commit sins. Assuming that these sex scandals are true, then let us condemn what they have done but not the Catholic Church, the institution where we, Catholics, have belonged for more than 2,000 years. Let us leave the Pope to decide on their fate.

—GODOFREDO O. PETEZA SR.,
J.P. Rizal Street,
Barangay Camambugan,
4600 Daet, Camarines Norte

No discrepancy in LRA remittances

THIS pertains to the news item last June 14, 2003 where the Land Registration Authority (LRA) was mentioned as one of 12 government agencies with questionable remittances for the year 2002.

We strongly object to the inclusion of the LRA on the list, simply because the discrepancies between the LRA and the Bureau of the Treasury's records of remittance are a question of reconciliation. With the receipt of the BTR's Abstracts of Remittance, the LRA has already accounted for the discrepancy in deposits.

The official Comparative Statement of Deposits for the Year 2002 shows the respective total deposits of P1.157 and P1.153 billion taken up in the BTR's Abstracts of Remittance and the LRA's Books of Accounts with the difference of P3.839 million still subject to reconciliation. To date, however, a total of P2.250 million out of the P3.839 million difference has been verified to have been twice taken up in the BTR's Abstracts of Remittance as shown in the Statement of Reconciliation.

We will greatly appreciate it if the LRA is excluded from the list of government agencies with questionable remittances with the Bureau of the Treasury.

—BENEDICTO B. ULEP,
administrator,
Land Registration Authority,
East Avenue cor. NIA Road,
Quezon City

Where have all the P10 bills gone?

IT is almost two months now that I have observed that P10 bills are very scarce. Exchanging a P20 bill for two P10 bills at the store is hard now. I'm sure I'm not the only one affected by its scarcity.

How true is it that the P10 bills will be withdrawn from circulation? This is not the solution to the problem of unsturdiness of the P10 bills. The best solution is to replace them with better quality and more durable material, like abaca fiber. Japan is reportedly doing this.

Other denominations that have become scarce are the 5-centavo and 10-centavo coins, which are also important in our business activities. All existing small and big denominations in our currency should be made available all the time. Not a single denomination should be phased out.

As a consumer, I have been shortchanged on several occasions at grocery stores or supermarkets due to the non-availability of 5-centavo and 10-centavo coins. In lieu of giving us the right change, a cashier would give us candies. This would not be a problem, if there is ample supply of money in the denominations most used.

—QUIRICO M. GORPIDO JR.,
Maasin City, Southern Leyte

GSIS bank employees facing charges

THIS refers to the column of Neal H. Cruz, titled "P632,000 burned/stolen inside GSIS vault," last June 16. Cruz thinks the management of the GSIS Family Bank (Imus, Cavite branch) has been remiss in its duties regarding the incident.

GSIS Family Bank president Marcos F. Catalan wrote Cruz on the same day the column appeared to say that action had been taken against those responsible. Lolita L. Alinsod, branch manager, and Janice Reyes, a teller, were both suspended preventively without pay. Administrative cases have already been filed against cashier Rosemarie R. Jamir and accounting assistant Kathleen N. Vargas. These cases are now pending with the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel, while the criminal aspect, which the officials of the GSIS Family Bank are monitoring closely, is currently being handled by the Imus police.

This is not the first time Cruz has shown bias in writing about GSIS-related matters. This leads us to conclude that he has a personal crusade to discredit the government agency and its management. His tirades against the GSIS are exasperating.

We wish to stress that the GSIS operates within the framework of good, ethical and honest management practices and has nothing to hide. It can stand up to public scrutiny anytime, even by writers like Cruz.

—MER NILO P. RACIMO,
vice president for public affairs,
GSIS, Financial Center,
Pasay City

A pain widely shared

THE TRAGEDY that befell Bishop Teodoro Bacani in what is alleged to be a case of sexual harassment not only pained the Catholic Church but also those of us who profess the name of Christ outside of its fold.

Let it not be said that I am an apologist for Bishop Bacani. I am a Protestant and the Catholic Church calls us "separated brethren" (although one doesn't know whether the emphasis is on the adjective or the noun). But I am compelled to speak because in a highly emotional issue such as this one, one tends to generate more heat but very little light.

Since the matter is now in the hands of the Vatican, let the canonical processes take place. Let us stop condemning and finger-pointing, in the meantime. Let us heed the wisdom of the Scriptural injunction: "He who judges me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the heart."

—SALVADOR D. EDUARTE,
minister, United Church of Christ,
Sta. Maria East, San Nicolas,
Pangasinan

Drugs and numerology

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

MY, my, the Tita and her officials have been so terribly busy running around trying to solve the drug problem.

What's so fascinating is the way this latest campaign has bandied numbers around, almost as if guided by a corps of accomplished numerologists.

A few weeks back, to launch the current campaign, one senator made the headlines by declaring we had three million Filipinos who regularly take prohibited drugs. The next day, a congressman made the headlines by protesting that three million figure and claiming it should be nine million.

Do I hear a bid now for 12 million? No?

Maybe we should stick to nine million. I'm sure the country's many numerologists will approve. Nine has a nice lucky ring to it. Maybe make that 9,999,999. We need to have the drug problem sounding really serious, the way a P999.99 price tag gives the impression of quality. At the same time, you don't want to tip the scales and round off to P1,000 because psychologically, it drives people away. In the same token, a 10 million figure for drug abusers might indicate incompetence and corruption on the part of our officials.

Not that people haven't started wondering. But people are still at the "9999999" stage, where they want to think that we won't quite reach the critical point of no return. So we praise heaven whenever some politician and wannabe politician comes up with a new flea-brained scheme to solve the drug problem.

For two years now, we've allowed the Land Transportation Office (LTO) to herd us into filthy cubicles where we were literally robbed: first made to pee, then hand over P300 for a drug test notorious for false positives (meaning people not taking drugs coming out positive) and, worse, false negatives (people on drugs coming out negative).

After two years of mandatory peeing and testing, are our streets safer?

Just yesterday an LTO official said that out of the latest round of 1.9 million drug tests, they found 13,285 positive. The official declared, too, that the tests showed shabu and marijuana were the preferred prohibited drugs. Gut reaction: Imagine that, thanks to the LTO, we got thousands of marijuana and shabu dependents off the streets.

Really now. First, the LTO tests only check for two drugs. I give you two guesses what they are.

But I was more interested in the numbers. Grab a calculator and you'll find that 13,285 out of 1.9 million comes out to less than 1 percent. To be precise, that's about 7 per 1,000, a statistic that stands in stark contrast to the more conservative claim of one congressman that we have three million drug dependents. Divide that three million by 40 million, the number of adult Filipinos, and we have a figure of 1 out of every 12.

Put another way, if indeed one out of every 12 Filipinos is hooked, then it means that out of 1.9 million license applicants, you should have something like 158,333 positives (wow, lucky 3's!). But the LTO bagged only 13,000. Your hunches are as good as mine. Did all the others just decide not to take the test? Or did they take the test but paid their way to have the results altered? Or have shabu users learned to just abstain from the drug for a few days, knowing their urine would then test negative? Or are those three million and nine million figures all the products of hocus-pocus numerology?

All that is, of course, irrelevant to the government. The Tita needs to show she cares and, boy, is she trying hard, for example visiting the LTO and berating officials for closing early and selling overpriced early warning devices. The other day, goodness, she actually began to direct traffic.

Don't get me wrong. All that's fine, but I think the Tita is much better at other caring tasks. Paying homage to Imperial America, for one. Or taunting the Muslims in the south, for another (of course, right before running to Papa Bush for support). And lately, threatening the drug syndicates.

Already, we're seeing results. The other night the television newscasts blared out the latest arrests: 600 plus drug dependents and 600 plus drug pushers.

Teka, teka, teka (wait, wait, wait—really, the Inquirer should do something about this translating policy), isn't there something wrong here? First, I didn't see the Tita wagging her finger at those arrested. Second, oh the numbers again. Isn't it strange you have about the same number of drug pushers and drug dependents? Even stranger is the way this fits into the trends of the arrests. The Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency announced recently that in the last year it apprehended 15,718 people on drug raps, broken down to 8,881 suspected drug users and 6,803 suspected pushers, drug cultivators and importers.

So many lucky 8's but hey, that's a ratio of 1.3 customers for every 1 pusher/cultivator/importer. Calling the Department of Trade and Industry: Someone better conduct seminars on marketing for the drug syndicates.

There's more. The PDEA total isn't a total: 8,881 plus 6,803 equals 15,684, not 15,718. Paging the Department of Education: We need someone to check if our law enforcers know how to count. If they can't get their number of arrests right, should we be surprised how they sometimes go off with their inventories of confiscated drugs, missing a few thousand ecstasy pills here, a few hundred kilos of shabu there?

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

US majority believes Bush lied or 'stretched truth' about Iraq

WASHINGTON—For the first time since the beginning of the war in Iraq, a majority of Americans has come to the conclusion the Bush administration either "stretched the truth" about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction or told outright lies, according to a new opinion survey.

The poll by the University of Maryland found that 52 percent of respondents said they believed President George W. Bush and his aides were "stretching the truth, but not making false statements" about Iraqi president Saddam Hussein's chemical, biological and nuclear programs.

Another 10 percent said US officials were presenting Congress, the American public and the international community "evidence they knew was false," indicated the survey which was made public Tuesday.

Only 32 percent said they thought the government was being "fully truthful" about the Iraqi arsenal.

The weapons of mass destruction—as well as the Iraqi government's alleged ties to the al-Qaida terrorist group—which the administration claimed represented an immediate threat to the Unites States, served as the chief rationale for launching the March 20 invasion of the country.

But more than three months since the start of the war, US troops have yet to find any of the suspected weapons.

As a result, 63 percent of Americans now believe the US Congress should investigate intelligence agencies to find out how they came up with information about the alleged Iraqi arsenal, the survey found.

Similarly, 56 percent of those polled believed the US government stretched the truth or made outright false statements about Hussein's ties to al-Qaida.

Although overall support for the war in Iraq remained high, the poll gave indications of its erosion, as Americans began to qualify their backing of the White House on the subject.

Thus, the share of those who unconditionally supported the war because they think launching it was the right thing to do dwindled from 53 percent in early May to 46 percent in early June, the poll showed.

By contrast, 29 percent of respondents—up from 22 percent in May—now say the United States was wrong in starting the war.

The share of those who were no longer sure about the wisdom of launching Operation Iraqi Freedom but were willing to support Bush because he is president increased from 15 percent to 18 percent. *AFP*

US PRESIDENT George W. Bush participates in the Presidential Reenlistment of Military Service Members in the East Room of the White House July 1 in Washington, DC. AFP

Bush raises record $34M for war chest

WASHINGTON—US President George W. Bush raised a record $34.2 million in the last three months, dwarfing a field of nine Democrats led by former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean's Internet-driven $7.5 million haul.

Bush, who broke his own record of $29.7 million in a single quarter in 1999, collected nearly two-thirds of his donations at a nationwide series of fund-raisers in the last few weeks.

Campaign officials said contributions came from 95,000 donors in all 50 states and 82 percent of US counties.

"There is great enthusiasm virtually everywhere, there is broad support for the president on many different levels," campaign chairman Marc Racicot told reporters in a conference call.

Bush will vastly outspend his Democratic rivals in the 2004 race, raising as much as $200 million to run for the Republican nomination even though he is unopposed.

Dean's surprisingly strong fund-raising landed him in first place among the Democratic contenders and cemented the one-time longshot as a legitimate top-tier candidate for the party's nomination to face Bush.

"We're headed in the right direction and a lot of other candidates are headed in the wrong direction," Dean campaign manager Joe Trippi said. "We're becoming the strongest insurgent campaign in the history of politics."

Dean's totals, driven by nearly $3 million raised online in the last week, shot him ahead of the fund-raising leaders during the first three months of the year, North Carolina Sen. John Edwards and Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry.

None of the other candidates had released their figures by late afternoon, but all conceded the party's second-quarter crown to Dean, who raised $2.6 million in the first three months of the year. *Reuters*

5 hurt as Qantas passengers exit plane in panic

SYDNEY—Five passengers of a Qantas 747 were injured when two escape chutes malfunctioned after a fire in the landing gear triggered a panicked evacuation, Australia's national flag carrier admitted Wednesday.

The 347 passengers were ordered by the captain to evacuate through the inflatable chutes when a ground engineer spotted smoke from one of the 16 brakes of Flight QF6 from Frankfurt moments after it landed at Sydney airport early on Wednesday.

The five passengers, including a 75-year-old grandmother, later required hospital treatment for minor injuries including friction burns and grazes sustained as they fled the aircraft down the faulty chutes.

"As I understand it, there was a problem with two of the chutes," Qantas aircraft operations executive general manager David Forsyth said.

"What happens in an emergency deployment of the slide raft or the chute is that obviously not all of them necessarily work the way you want them to."

He said small fires were "not uncommon" in aircraft brakes, but the jet would be fitted with new brakes before returning to service.

British passenger Jasper Byrne, 27, who escaped without injury, said some of the passengers had panicked after the captain ordered the evacuation. "People were literally crying when they got off," Byrne told reporters.

"Someone was having an asthma attack... it was quite traumatic really, definitely for the older people."

He said passengers were not told why they had to evacuate and could not tell that anything was wrong from inside the plane.

Another passenger, Gordon Garratley, 51, said he had seen one of the chutes collapse as people were evacuating.

"There were about two or three people coming down," he said. "They would have had a fall of about three meters."

An unidentified passenger told ABC radio he was alarmed when the passengers and crew were ordered to evacuate down the plane's emergency slides. *AFP*

Iraq attacks wound US troops; imam killed in blast

BAGHDAD—Six American soldiers were wounded in Iraq on Tuesday and a group of visiting senators said there could be more attacks on US troops after a fatal blast at a mosque fueled Muslim anger with the occupying forces.

"The war is still on, the risks are still there and casualties could well be taken," said Sen. John Warner, a Republican from Virginia.

There were no signs of easing tensions on Tuesday as three attacks injured six US troops. Attacks on occupying forces have killed 22 US and six British soldiers since May 1.

An unexplained explosion damaged a mosque in the already tense town of Falluja, dominated by minority Sunnis. The blast killed nine people, including the imam.

In line with the somber tone of the visiting senators, a new poll in the United States found Americans were more pessimistic about the conflict than when US President George W. Bush said in early May that major fighting in Iraq had ended.

A USA Today/CNN/Gallup poll found the percentage of Americans who said things were going well for US forces in Iraq dropped to 56 percent from 70 percent a month ago. That was down from 86 percent during the week of May 7. Bush said, on May 1 that major combat was over.

The poll found 37 percent believed the Bush administration deliberately misled the public about whether Iraq had serious weapons of mass destruction, up from 31 percent a month ago.

US forces have so far found only conventional weapons, but Bush insisted on Tuesday that Iraq had had weapons of mass destruction.

Despite the growing skepticism at home, Bush reiterated Washington had no intention of having its 150,000 troops chased out of Iraq.

"The rise of Iraq, as an example of moderation and democracy and prosperity, is a massive and long-term undertaking," Bush said. "We will stay on the offensive against the enemy, and all who attack our troops will be met with direct and decisive force."

In Baghdad, three soldiers were hurt near al-Mustansiriyah University when a makeshift bomb exploded by their vehicle, a military spokesperson said. Their Iraqi interpreter was missing.

Bystanders saw troops drag four people who appeared to be badly wounded from the burning wreck.

A US vehicle and an Iraqi car were on fire shortly after the midmorning blast in central Baghdad, according to a Reuters reporter. *Reuters*

Baby buried alive rescued from grave after 16 hours

NEW DELHI—A new-born baby girl who was buried alive by her father in the central Indian state of Madhya Pradesh was rescued from the grave after 16 hours, a report said Wednesday.

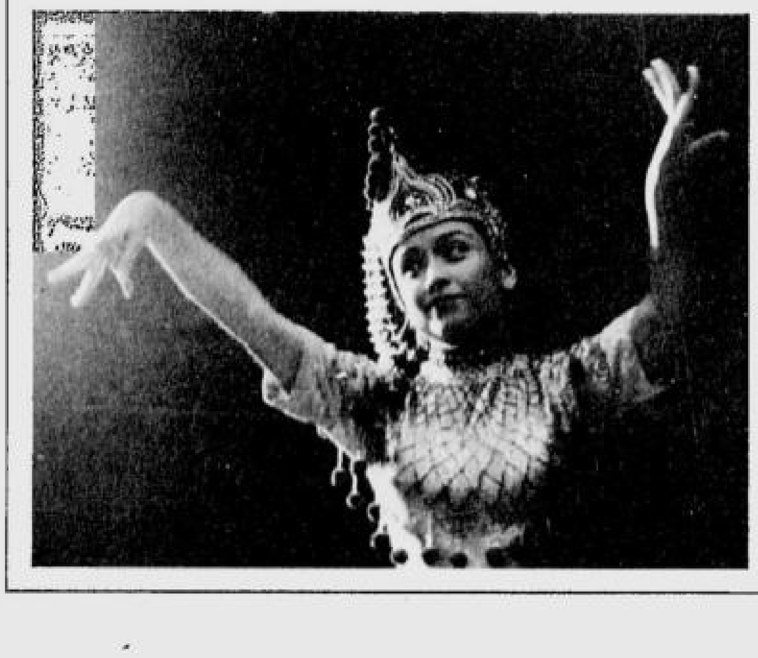
The baby, born Monday morning, was the family's third female child, the United News of India (UNI) news agency reported.

A daughter is generally unwelcome in many poor families as parents cannot afford the traditional dowry and other marriage expenses which follow when the girl grows up.

The "trauma" made the father bury the child in a hole near their hamlet, the report said, adding that when the mother protested the man threatened her.

But the matter became known to the local authorities who ordered the grave exhumed.

The baby was found to be alive and was taken to a hospital, the report said. A case was registered against her father, who ran away, the report said. *AFP*



MAK YONG

Malaysian dancer Norzizi Zulkifli performs "Mak Yong," an ancient Malay dance-theater, during a rehearsal in Kuala Lumpur July 2. "Mak Yong" is performed with elements of dance, music, acting, singing and storytelling. REUTERS

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Israel prepares to hand over Bethlehem to Palestinians

JERUSALEM—Israel was preparing to hand over control of the West Bank city of Bethlehem to Palestinian security forces on Wednesday, a key step in a US-backed peace plan, after the two sides' leaders met in Jerusalem.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas made a joint commitment to end almost three years of conflict on Tuesday and then held talks on further steps toward peace that both sides said were positive.

Sharon and Abbas agreed to set up four committees to work on implementing the 'road map,' a plan that points the way to the establishment of a Palestinian state in 2005.

"I would characterize the whole meeting as getting down to business with a positive approach, looking forward rather than dwelling on the past," said Sharon spokesperson Ra'anan Gissin.

"We can do this together and the conditions now are promising to make further progress," a Palestinian official quoted Abbas as telling Sharon. Palestinian Information Minister Nabil Amr said Sharon and Abbas would meet again next week.

Earlier, Israeli and Palestinian military commanders met to discuss the handover in Bethlehem that Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz said would take place on Wednesday.

The transfer of power there follows an Israeli pullback from much of the Gaza Strip that restored free movement for Palestinians for the first time in two-and-a-half years.

The road map requires Palestinian police to fill security vacuums wherever Israeli troops and tanks pull out, and Palestinian commanders promised to prevent attacks against Israel from Bethlehem, an Israeli security source said.

Bethlehem mayor Hanna Nasser, who has watched Israel hand back responsibility for the West Bank city before, only to return after a spate of violence, said he hoped Wednesday's handover would be more serious than its predecessor.

"I can do nothing except to be optimistic, because I see no alternative for the two peoples other than to live together," Nasser told Israeli TV.

The Bethlehem pullout, which will leave Israeli troops stationed at the edge of the city near a Jewish shrine, marks the completion of a US-mediated deal that is part of the peace plan.

White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer said President George W. Bush welcomed the statements made by Abbas and Sharon.

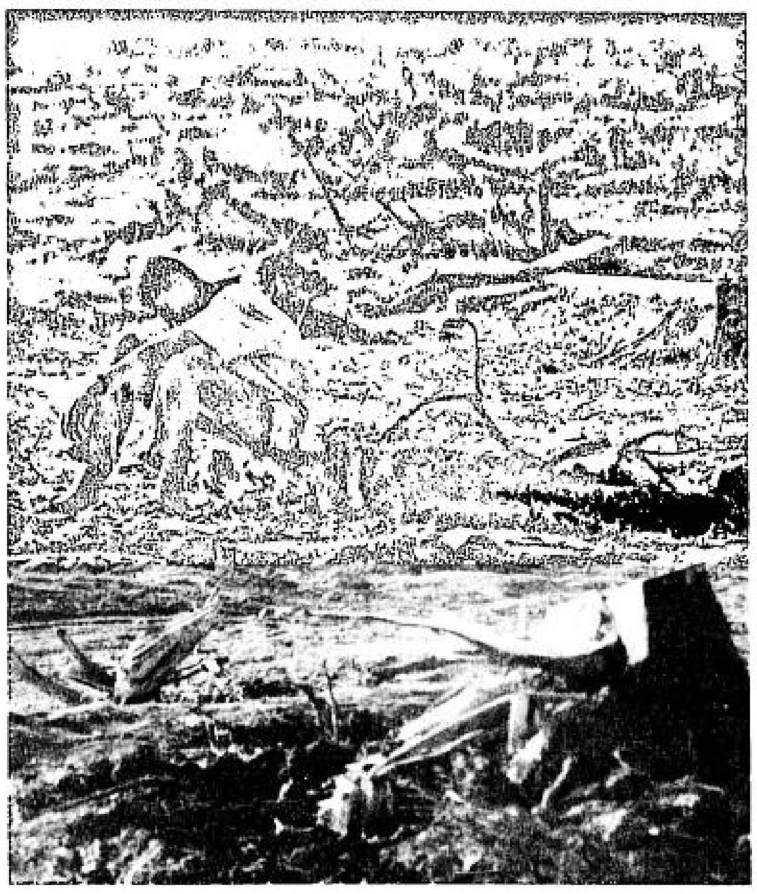
"The president is pleased that the process is continuing with Prime Minister Abbas and Prime Minister Sharon working as hard as they are and as diligently as they are in the spirit that they are," said Fleischer.

"It's an encouraging moment when you see the two leaders speak like that."

On Wednesday, US officials were to announce a $30 million aid package for the Palestinians to help repair damaged roads and restore public services in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, a US official said.

In another positive signal for the US-backed peace plan, a poll of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip found that an overwhelming 80 percent support an unlimited truce with Israel.

On Sunday leading Palestinian militants declared a temporary halt to attacks on Israelis, but the truce was quickly challenged by two West Bank attacks in which two people were killed. *Reuters*



AFTER the pullback of Israeli tanks a Palestinian boy rests July 1 in an uprooted orange orchard, destroyed during the Israeli army operation in the northern Gaza Strip. REUTERS

US cuts off military aid to 35 countries backing ICC

WASHINGTON—The United States said on Tuesday it was cutting off military aid to 35 countries, including Colombia and six nations seeking Nato membership, because they back the International Criminal Court and have not exempted Americans from possible prosecution.

Another dozen countries were also prohibited from receiving US military aid but they had not been getting any this year.

The decision to suspend aid is the latest attack by the Bush administration on the international court, set up last year to try war crimes and acts of genocide.

The United States signed the 1998 treaty creating the court. But the Bush administration is afraid the tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands, backed by most European countries, might hear politically motivated prosecutions of US military and civilian leaders.

The suspension affects $47 million in US foreign military financing and $613,000 in international military and educational training in this fiscal year, which expires on Sept. 30, State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher said.

Under last year's American Service Members Protection Act, the basis for the suspension, President George W. Bush can issue waivers for governments that sign the exemption deals or when he think military aid is in the national interest.

Bush issued waivers for 22 countries on Tuesday as the deadline passed for governments to sign exemption agreements.

But those 22 did not include Colombia, one of the largest aid recipients, and the eastern European countries of Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia. *Reuters*

Huge anti-gov't street protest hits Hong Kong

HONG KONG—Hundreds of thousands of protesters took to Hong Kong's streets on Tuesday to denounce the government and its planned anti-subversion law in the city's biggest demonstration since the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre.

"Return rule to the people," they chanted as the rally began to denounce the bill which critics say will impose Beijing-style control over free speech and the media.

Brandishing banners, umbrellas and fans, many wore black on a sweltering day to mourn what they said was the demise of rights and freedoms in one of the world's key financial centers.

Critics say the law, which Beijing has been pressing Hong Kong to enact, poses the biggest threat to basic rights in the former British colony since it reverted to Chinese rule in 1997.

Earlier, a group of protesters burned the Communist Party flag as Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao tried to reassure the territory that its freedoms would be protected. But the afternoon march was peaceful.

By nightfall, organizers said around 500,000 people had turned out, while police said they counted at least 350,000 people as of 6 p.m. It was the largest protest in Hong Kong since 1989, when a million turned out after troops killed hundreds of pro-democracy demonstrators in the Chinese capital.

The government has said it would not back down on the national security legislation regardless of Tuesday's turnout.

Despite renewed criticism from the United States and Britain, the bill is bound to be passed by the territory's legislature, which is packed with pro-Beijing and pro-government supporters.

Hong Kong Chief Executive Tung Chee-hwa, who was mocked on many of the placards, issued a statement saying it was the government's responsibility to pass the security law as required by the Basic Law, its mini-constitution.

"The government has promised the rights and freedom enjoyed in Hong Kong now won't be affected by the legislation," he said.

The anti-subversion measures, to be enshrined as Article 23 of the Basic Law, were the prime target of many of the protesters. But others said they were frustrated by the government's handling of the ailing economy and the SARS epidemic, which killed some 300 people in the territory. *Reuters*

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TENS of thousands of people pack a Hong Kong street while marching to Hong Kong government headquarters July 1, to protest the Hong Kong government's plans to enact an anti-subversion bill that critics fear will curtail civil liberties. AP

Encephalitis kills 2 more in south China

BEIJING—Two more people have died and another 14 in southern China have been infected with Japanese encephalitis, a sometimes fatal inflammation of the brain, state media said Wednesday.

The health ministry, reiterated that the situation was under control.

Japanese encephalitis is a severe inflammation of the brain caused by the Japanese B encephalitis virus transmitted by the bite of infected mosquitoes. Common in Asia, the disease affects children and tends to be more actively spread during the summer.

The encephalitis B outbreak has now killed 27 people from 310 confirmed infections in Guangdong province as of Monday evening, the China Daily quoted local officials as saying. About 90 percent of Guangdong's encephalitis B cases are children under 11.

Vice Gov. Lei Yulan said the outbreak was under control, but urged health officials across the province to remain on alert for further cases, the report said.

Fewer than five cases a day have been reported since June 20, the report said, and Lei told a conference on the disease in the provincial capital Guangzhou Tuesday that the infection rate had dropped to new lows.

Fifty suspected cases have also been reported in the province, the report said.

Guangdong has witnessed a "mini-outbreak" of encephalitis B since the end of April. The disease has been detected in 18 prefecture-level cities in Guangdong, with only Zhuhai, Foshan and Jiangmen recording no cases.

The health ministry said earlier this week the incidence of encephalitis B remains relatively low in China, and the possibility of a nationwide outbreak has been basically ruled out, according to state media. *AFP*

Man suspected in anthrax attacks trained US troops—NYT

WASHINGTON—The man described by US Attorney General John Ashcroft as a "person of interest" in a probe of 2001 anthrax mailings helped train US special forces in biological warfare in the lead-up to the Iraq war, The New York Times reported Wednesday.

Citing unnamed administration officials and experts, the newspaper said doctor Steven Hatfill had helped the US government set up a mobile bioweapons laboratory that was used to teach US troops what to look for in Iraq.

The secret project that began three years ago was designed to teach special operations units to detect and disarm mobile germ factories of the sort that Iraq was suspected of building, according to the report.

The heart of the effort was a covert plan to construct a mobile germ plant, real in all its parts but never actually "plugged in" to make weapons, The Times said.

To design the unit, the government turned to Hatfill, then a rising star in the world of biological defense.

According to the report, officials now say a major reason Hatfill came under suspicion following the 2001 anthrax attacks that left five people dead was his work on the mobile unit.

In any case, investigators found no evidence suggesting that the plant ever made anthrax, the paper said. *AFP*

People may be able to work until 70 in UK

LONDON—British employees would be able to work until they are at least 70 under new proposals put forward by the government on Wednesday.

In a consultation paper, the government suggested several changes to the country's employment laws aimed at stamping out age discrimination and allowing people to stop work when they want to—not when they are forced to.

The government says unfair age discrimination costs Britain as much as 16 billion pounds a year by forcing healthy people out of the labor market before they are ready to retire.

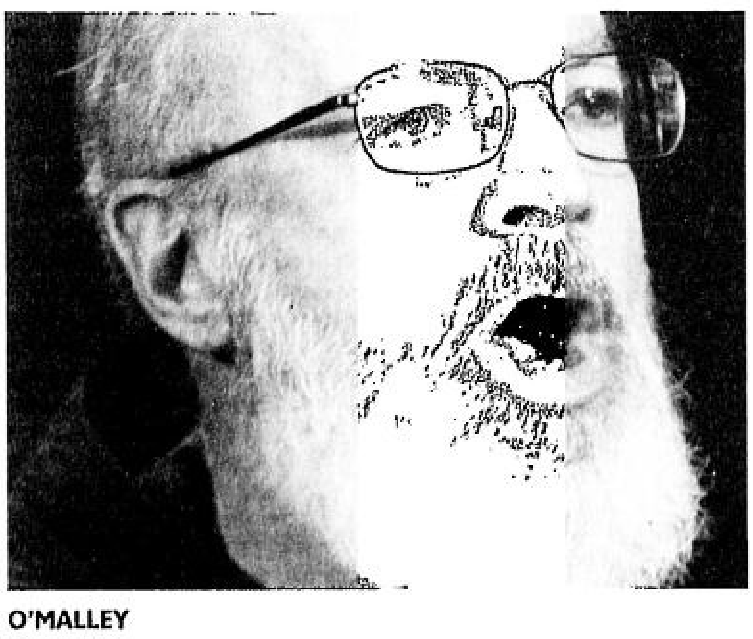
One proposal is to scrap the retirement age altogether, as in the United States, while another suggests a notional retirement age of 70 which would be open to negotiation between employers and employees.

"The most obvious change will be the abolition of compulsory retirement," Trade and Industry Secretary Patricia Hewitt said.

"This is not about forcing people to work until they are 70 or even older. But this is about giving people much more choice," she told BBC Radio.

"We've got to get away from a situation where hundreds of thousands of people are forced out of employment—usually against their will—in their 50s, sometimes even their late 40s..." With people living longer and the stock market having tumbled sharply, Britain's pensions system faces huge problems. *Reuters*

New Boston church leader vows to protect children



O'MALLEY

BOSTON—Sean O'Malley, the Roman Catholic bishop picked to lead the Archdiocese of Boston, said on Tuesday protecting children was his top priority as he vowed to heal a church devastated by a clergy sexual abuse scandal.

Speaking to reporters in the city after Pope John Paul II named him the new archbishop of Boston, O'Malley said he aimed to settle the hundreds of clergy sexual abuse lawsuits facing the church and criticized previous archdiocese leaders for "mishandling" pedophile priests.

He succeeds the disgraced Cardinal Bernard Law, who resigned in December after documents showed he and other former top archdiocesan officials left known pedophiles in active ministry or moved them from church to church without telling parishioners or reporting them to civil authorities.

In a statement issued through the archdiocese, Law congratulated his successor and offered O'Malley his prayers.

The archbishop-designate noted the sums of money required to settle the abuse lawsuits were "staggering" and that no amount could ever compensate for the damage caused by abuse. But he said settling was imperative.

"I have always told diocesan lawyers in the past that settlements are not hush money or extortion or anything other than the rightful indemnification of persons who have suffered gravely at the hands of a priest," he said.

O'Malley, currently bishop of Palm Beach, Florida, is known as a soft-spoken but very conservative bishop with wide experience healing dioceses damaged by sex abuse scandals. As a first step toward reconciliation, O'Malley met on Tuesday afternoon with victims of abusive priests and their relatives.

O'Malley, who sports a thick beard and is described by at least one acquaintance as shunning "pomp and circumstance," spent Monday night at the archdiocese's headquarters.

A member of the Franciscan order, O'Malley told reporters he felt "kind of shell-shocked" about leading an archdiocese that is 10 times the size of Palm Beach and is considered by many to be the emotional hub of the US Catholic Church. *Reuters*

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NPA rebs burn another Baliwag bus

By **Anselmo Roque**, *PDI Central Luzon Desk*

CABANATUAN CITY—Suspected New People's Army rebels burned another Baliwag bus in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija, on Tuesday night, police said.

The incident was the second attack on the bus firm in a month, following the burning of a Metro Manila-bound Baliwag bus, also in Nueva Ecija, on June 3.

Police said the Cuyapo-bound bus was cruising along the national highway at Barangay San Antonio in Cuyapo at 8:45 p.m. when one of the passengers approached the driver, Conrado Batungbakal, 36, and ordered him to stop the vehicle.

Suddenly, 20 armed men emerged from the roadsides and ordered the passengers to take their belongings and alight.

The armed men then poured gasoline on the bus and set it on fire.

No one was reported hurt among the passengers.

San Antonio is a few kilometers from the boundary of Guimba and Cuyapo towns. Cuyapo is 56 km from this city.

In Carmen, Cebu, the son of a barangay councilor was killed while a soldier was wounded on Monday in an encounter between government troopers and NPA rebels in a hinterland village.

The fatality was identified as Noel Batiquin, 33, who was suspected by the military to be an NPA member. The allegation was vehemently denied by Batiquin's father Fredo, a barangay councilor.

One Sergeant Dacara suffered bullet wounds in the stomach and left arm. He was flown by helicopter to a military hospital inside the Armed Forces Central Command headquarters in Cebu City.

Lt. Col. Ruby Bongabong, Cent-Com spokesperson, refused to give more details about his identity, saying they still had to inform his family about the incident.

Capt. Fernando Aguilar, civil military operations officer of the 78th Infantry Battalion (IB) based in northern Cebu, said about 30 soldiers from Alpha Company, led by 1st Lt. Alan Margarate, received a tip about the presence of armed men in Sitio Mag-alon, Barangay Ipil, around 6 km from the town proper.

The soldiers arrived in the barangay at about 3:25 p.m. but were fired upon by a group of rebels. The exchange of gunfire lasted 20 minutes.

The NPA members retreated toward the mountains of neighboring Danao City.

Aguilar said the troops recovered military backpacks and military uniforms identified as the ones stolen by rebels who raided a military detachment in Barangay Kaurasan, Carmen on Dec. 12, 2002. Four soldiers died during the attack.

The Cuyapo incident has brought to four the number of buses burned by suspected NPA rebels in Central Luzon since April.

On June 7, at least 30 suspected NPA rebels burned a Santrans bus in Gerona, Tarlac.

Police said the rebels told the passengers that they burned the bus because its owner had refused to pay "revolutionary taxes."

On June 3, rebels burned a Baliwag bus along the mountain highway in Carranglan, Nueva Ecija.

Police blamed the NPA for the burning of a Philippine Rabbit bus in Capas, Tarlac, on April 7.

With reports from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk; and Kathy Navarro and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau

Evacuees receive gov't core shelters

By **Jeffrey M. Tupas**
PDI Mindanao Bureau

PRESIDENT Macapagal exchanges pleasantries with the family of Kili Gani, one of the beneficiaries of the government's core shelters in Barangay Kabasalan in Pikit, North Cotabato. Looking on is Presidential Adviser for Mindanao Jesus Dureza.
RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

PIKIT, North Cotabato—After almost five months since the war against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) broke out here, evacuees are now tired of blaming the government or the rebels for their miseries.

For 18-year-old Monawara, the days of finger-pointing are over.

Monawara, of Barangay Barongis, said going home was the most important thing for the refugees.

"We are thankful because the government declared ceasefire. We are thankful because finally we have experienced peace that we did not have for several months," she said.

With her change of heart, Monawara and other residents of Barongis endured an hour's walk on a craggy road toward Barangay Kabasalan just to see President Macapagal-Arroyo on Tuesday. The village was the first recipient of the government's core shelter program after the takeover of the MILF stronghold in the Buliok Complex.

Residents of other neighboring villages, like Bagoinged, Gli-Gli, Buliok, Bulod and Bulol, also came to welcome Ms Macapagal, the first Philippine president to visit Kabasalan, a former lair of the MILF.

The President distributed certificate of home ownership and livelihood funds to the people of Kabasalan.

"We're very excited to see her. We did not mind the muddy and difficult road. All we want is to see her," Monawara said.

Monawara, a junior high school student, said she wanted to thank the President for supporting them while they were all still at the evacuation centers.

During the war in February, Monawara was in Cebu. She said she decided to go home after learning through television that a new war erupted here and forced many people to evacuate.

She had then expected that her family was among the thousands of evacuees. Although it was not safe to go home, she said she went back just to be with her family at the evacuation center.

"What was important was for me was to be with my family. I really cried after seeing them in the evacuation center. I asked myself why should it happen but found no answer," she said.

Later, she said, she realized that what happened was part of life. "That's why we are not blaming anyone anymore."

Asked what she would tell the President if she had the chance to talk to her, she said: "We would want to tell the President that the evacuees want to be free. We want an assurance from her that we will not be dislocated again. We want to live normal lives again."

Monawara said she was hoping that the government would hasten the delivery of core shelters for evacuees in her village so they could start rebuilding their lives.

"The fear will always be there. But we can see that our situation now is okay, but still fear is engulfing us. We came back out of determination and because the President wanted us to go home," she said.

Makaya, 19, believed that the only assurance that there will be no more fighting in their area was for the government and the MILF to go back to the negotiating table.

He said his family was forced to leave their house in Raja Muda three times.

8 suspected drug traffickers arrested

By **Aquiles Z. Zonio**
PDI Mindanao Bureau

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Government troopers arrested eight suspected big-time drug traffickers during a raid on three houses here on Tuesday night.

Arrested were Muktadir Mihang, his wife Samera, Munib Pagilidan, Normina Mando, Basir Sambaga, Sajid Sagli, Rogelio Rubio and Ebrahim Pangulamas.

Armed with a search warrant issued by Judge Jose Bersales of the Municipal Trial Court Branch 2, the raiding team swooped down on the suspects' houses in Purok 2, Barangay Apopong at around 7:20 p.m. The team was led by Col. Edgardo Gurrea, chief of the 601st Army Brigade's Joint Task Force Gensan, and Supt. Efren Alcuizar, regional chief of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA).

Seized were two grenades, a rocket-propelled grenade, seven small sachets of methamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu weighing about nine grams, 100 grams of dried marijuana leaves and drug paraphernalia.

Brig. Gen. Alexander Yano, brigade commander, said they had received reports that the houses were safehouses of suspected drug traffickers.

"The raid was conducted to arrest the suspected drug traffickers. But it turned out during the raid that the safehouses were also used as storage for explosives," Yano said.

The suspects were placed in the custody of police and military intelligence agents for interrogation.

The explosives were turned over to the 24th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team of the Joint Task Force Gensan, while the illegal drugs and other items were taken by the PDEA for laboratory examination.

Yano said they were trying to establish whether the suspects had links to terrorist groups operating in Mindanao.

"They were suspected drug traffickers but we will try to find out why they were keeping explosives," he said.

City Councilor Delia Rabanes, president of the Association of Barangay Captains and village chair of Apopong, told reporters that the suspects were not residents of the area.

ROUNDUP

Girl, 12, stabbed dead

PLARIDEL, Bulacan—A 12-year-old girl was stabbed and killed last week by a suspected drug-crazed tricycle driver who tried to rape her. Yvette Pontillas, a first year high school student of the St. James Academy, succumbed to 40 stab wounds. Police said Pontillas boarded the suspect's tricycle on her way home to Barangay Sta. Rita at about 5 p.m. Friday. Her body was discovered in the municipal cemetery on Saturday. Mayor Roland Javier offered a cash reward for the arrest of the suspect.

Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

'Text NFA' system launched

TO PROVIDE the public with the facility to send their suggestions, inquiries or complaints regarding rice supply and prices during the lean months, the National Food Authority introduced the "Text NFA" system, which was launched Tuesday. In a statement, NFA administrator Arthur Yap said the food agency will start acting on complaints, suggestions of inquiries made via text messaging system. "This will hopefully limit the response time in acting on complaints made by our stakeholders," Yap said. The public may text the NFA by typing the keywords SUG for suggestions, QRY for inquiries or requests for NFA assistance, or CMP for complaints or grievances. The sender will then key in his name, mailing address and message. After which, the texter/consumer sends the message to 0917-6210927.

2 Taiwanese arrested in Davao

DAVAO CITY—Police on Sunday arrested at least two Taiwanese nationals, who were trying to buy mobile phones using a fake credit card. Yang Chih-Chieh, 33 and Chen-Chue-Yu, 30, were being detained at the Sta. Ana police station pending the filing of charges against them. Their arrest came after Wilson Yu, manager of Wiltelcom, a cellular phone outlet inside the Victoria Plaza in Bajada District, tipped off authorities that the suspects were in possession of a fake card bearing Standard Chartered as the supposed issuer.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Prayer rally against House bill

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Hundreds of Catholic devotees on Sunday afternoon braved the rain to attend a prayer rally against House Bill 6123, an Act establishing an Integrated Population and Development Policy, Strengthening Its Implementing Mechanism and for Other Purposes. Fifty-nine parishes belonging to the archdiocese sent their opposition in the second round of protest they held at the public amphitheater. Cagayan de Oro Rep. Constantino Jaraula, who attended the rally, said the bill was intended to stop the growing number of youths in developing countries. Jaraula said he would instead propose a bill recognizing life and abhorring abortion yet still giving priority to reproductive health.

Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Top gun ban violators

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Law enforcers are the top violators of the gun ban inside night spots, a videoke bar owner here said. Some city councilors earlier announced a plan to meet with owners and operators of entertainment businesses after a barangay councilman was shot by a certain Richard Garcia, allegedly a close friend of Chief Supt. Rodolfo Tor, Central Mindanao police director, inside the Don KTV bar at East Asia Royale Hotel. But Flaviano Roxas, owner of Nightshift KTV bar, told reporters that policemen and Army soldiers were the No. 1 violators of the law against the carrying of firearms inside the night spots, beer joints, cockpits and other public places. "We encounter difficulties in dealing with the Army and the police. They would always reason out that they are conducting surveillance," Roxas said.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Ecija vigilantes kill suspected drug offender

CABANATUAN CITY—A few hours after the leader of a vigilante group in Nueva Ecija announced that the group had a list of 21 drug pushers scheduled for liquidation, one of those on the list was killed by armed men in Gapan City on Monday night.

Police said the victim, Joel Joaquin, 21, was shot in the head three times by one of two men riding on a motorcycle. The gunmen were wearing bonnets when they attacked Joaquin at about 9 p.m.

Joaquin's father, identified only by his alias "Bayawak," was killed by suspected vigilantes last year.

On Monday, Ka Ryan, a leader of the disbanded Red Vigilante Group (RVG), the Nueva Ecija unit of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB), announced in a television interview that it had a list of 21 drug pushers planned for liquidation.

Ka Ryan shared this information with some members of the Nueva Ecija Press Club. Joaquin was third on Ka Ryan's hit list.

Lualhati Carapali, RPA-ABB national commander, confirmed that they were holding several hit lists of drug lords in the country, which, he said, they would share with the Philippine National Police "in due time."

In an interview in August last year, RVG founder Ric Peralta said the group had killed at least 20 people involved in the illegal drug trade since its founding in 1998.

Joaquin's relatives denied reports that he was involved in drug pushing.

In the last three years, more than 30 residents of Gapan were killed by suspected vigilantes for alleged involvement in illegal drug trade and use.

Carapali said the RPA-ABB lists were being gathered from the lower commands and would be submitted to Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency chief Anselmo Avenido and police anti-drug task force chief, Deputy Director General Edgardo Aglipay.

Carapali said that long before the Macapagal administration intensified its campaign against illegal drugs last month, the RPA-ABB had "already delivered its mission."

He said they had executed many people involved in drug trafficking.

He said the RPA-ABB's support to the campaign against crimes was in keeping up with the peace agreement it signed with the government in December 2000. The Macapagal administration reconstituted the peace negotiation.

According to Carapali, both panels are now implementing confidence-building measures. "We are following to the letter the peace accord," he said. *Anselmo Roque and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk, and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Earthquake jolts towns in Samar

TACLOBAN CITY—A strong undersea earthquake with a magnitude of 6 struck off Northern Samar early yesterday, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) in Eastern Visayas reported.

Myra Dolina of the Phivolcs-8 based in Palo, Leyte said the quake occurred at around 1 a.m. at 68 km north of Catarman town.

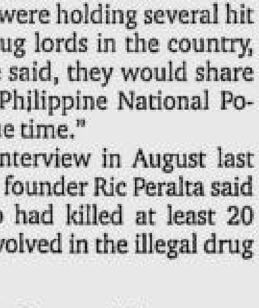
No damage was reported.

The source of the tremor, which lasted about 10 seconds, was traced to the Philippine Trench and was tectonic in origin, the Phivolcs said.

The Phivolcs said Catarman and Catbalogan towns in Samar felt an Intensity 6 temblor.

Joey Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau

Countdown for Justice



WAPILE

IT IS exactly 416 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

Gunmen abduct MNLF leader in Cotabato City

COTABATO CITY—Armed men wearing bonnets abducted on Tuesday a ranking leader of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), police reported yesterday.

The abduction of Embran Dumanog, alias Commander Ems, came a day after armed men gunned down another MNLF leader in Kidapawan City.

Police investigators, quoting traffic enforcers Saguila Palacala and Hadji Akmad Salik Dimasalang, said Dumanog was standing along S.K. Pendatun Avenue here at around 3 p.m. when he was taken and forced to board an L-300 van.

Mayor Muslimin Sema, MNLF secretary-general, said reports reaching him indicated that Dumanog was mauled and pistol-whipped by the abductors.

Sema said that although the gunmen were wearing civilian clothes, Dumanog's relatives believed that they were soldiers.

Sources from the Army's 6th Infantry Division in Maguindanao said they had no information about Dumanog's disappearance. They also denied the involvement of the military. *Edwin Fernandez and Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

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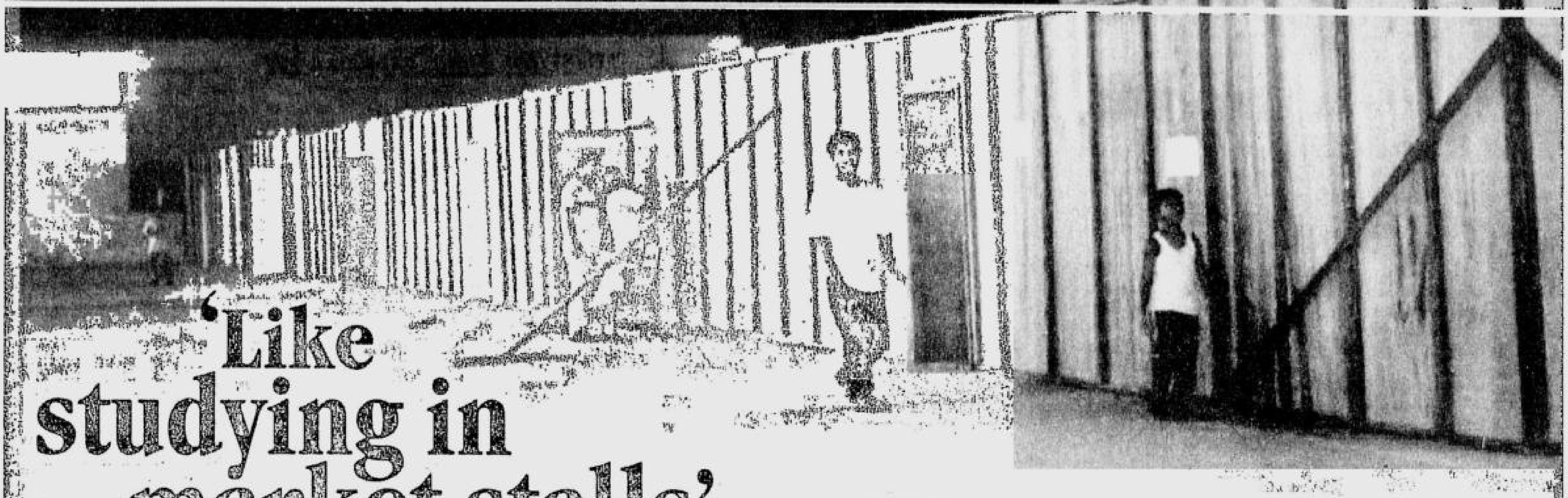


‘Like studying in market stalls’

WITHOUT doors and ceiling, these classrooms at the Batangas State University’s Integrated School in Barangay Alangilan, Batangas City look like market stalls, where pupils are exposed to the elements.

MEI MAGSINO

By Mei Magsino
Batangas City

M*UKHA kaming basang sisiw dito* (We look like downtrodden people here)” is how Cely Tolentino, 40, mother of a Grade 4 pupil at the Batangas State University’s Integrated School, described the situation of students who have been attending classes in rooms that look like market stalls.

Fourteen rooms are being constructed in the university gymnasium in Barangay Alangilan. Still without doors, the rooms are made of plywood and coconut lumber.

Thin walls separate each classroom, and the pupils are distracted by noise coming from other rooms as well as from the ongoing construction work. The pupils also complain of insects falling from the roof and biting them.

When the rains come, the floors are flooded, and so are the rooms, where the honor students are supposed to study.

“Pigpens are better than these because those are made of cement and concrete. The classrooms here have plywood for walls that look like stores for dried fish,” Tolentino said in Filipino.

Like all the parents of the 360 elementary students at the BSU-IS, Tolentino said she was at first surprised when their children were transferred to the university’s Alangilan campus.

“We thought education here would be better since it is a state university, that’s why we enrolled our children here,” Tolentino said.

In school year 1999-2000, the children were on the main campus on Rizal Avenue, where rooms were air-conditioned,” she recalled.

Another mother, who requested anonymity, said they have been complaining for years about the depressing state of the classrooms but their efforts have appeared fruitless.

Tuition

Nestor Valenzuela, whose grandson Michael Magno is a Grade 4 pupil in the BSU-IS, said he did not know where the students’ tuition went. Tuition ranges from P6,000 to P12,000, Valenzuela said. “By law, public elementary and high school [education] is supposed to be free.”

According to Bernardita de Chavez, the school’s acting assistant principal and sister-in-law of university president Dr. Ernesto de Chavez, they will be transferring to the engineering building, also in Alangilan.

“This is only temporary,” De Chavez said. “The situation will improve soon.”

De Chavez said she was able to assume her position only because she was the eldest among the elementary school teachers.

“Our tuition started at P6,000, but it has increased now to P12,000 or P14,000,” she said.

Belen Bagui, a Grade 3 teacher, said only 12 of the 14 classrooms were being used. The remaining two are still under construction.

The classes are open to up to Grade 5 pupils only, since the school has been operating for only four years.

Teaching skills

“Each class has an average of 30 students,” Bagui said, “and no matter how noisy the other room is, the learning of the pupils depends on the teacher. If the teacher is good, no matter how bad the noise is, the pupils will understand [their lessons].”

At present, Bagui said, nobody was complaining about the state of the school facilities.

“The parents are actually glad that we transferred here, because it is nearer than the former dormitory that the BSU rented,” Bagui said. “That dormitory is on the farther side of the subdivision, and the residents and pupils’ parents complained.”

“But now, there are no more complaints. The parents are actually grateful because this one’s nearer,” she said.

While this writer was interviewing the parents, BSU vice president for extension campuses Dr. Porfirio Ligaya demanded to see her permit to enter the university and even asked for her camera.

“Why are you taking photos here?” Ligaya said, “It is forbidden to take photos here. Do you have a permit? If you don’t have a permit, get out!”

When this writer did not leave, Ligaya ordered an armed security guard to arrest her.

Ligaya also talked to the teachers and students and ordered them to leave and stay away from this writer.

But outside the gate of the campus, some parents waited and talked to this writer.

Poor young artists sparkle in color

By Gil Francis G. Arevalo
Legazpi City

NINE young aspiring artists in Legazpi expressed their journeys in real life and inner emotions through art works exhibited last month at the city’s Pacific Mall.

They were among the 36,000 beneficiaries of the Child Sponsorship for Community Development Inc. (CSCDI) that conducted, for the first time, an exhibit featuring their brilliant and remarkable paintings in pastel.

“We organized this art exhibit to highlight and showcase the output of our beneficiary-students for whom we have provided art classes for the last five months. We’re very thankful for the coordination of I-help Network for they’re the ones who provided art lessons for these young, talented students,” Angela Morcoso, CSCDI Legazpi chair, said.

The CSCDI is a non-profit, nonsectarian, non-political and service-oriented organization under the auspices of the Society of our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity missions on the islands of Cagraray, Batan and San Miguel in Albay; in Legazpi and the towns of Manito and Daraga.

It started operations on July 12, 1982 through the Holy Land Christian Mission International, USA. It was launched in Legazpi on March 8, 1993.

The CSCDI is funded by the Child International through sponsorship funds. It aims to help children from the poorest families to become healthy, educated and self-reliant adults. It is involved in community-based and community-managed integrated development projects that encourage participation through volunteerism.

The program has a total of 14,083 sponsored children from 10,961 poor families in Albay.

Last month’s exhibit carried the theme “ArtiSantintA,” a Bicol term for “Art of Color”—art, in the sense that color was the medium of expression of the youth’s innermost emotions, shifting moods, imagination and reality.

Wounded

Jayson Lopo, 16, has been a beneficiary of CSCDI for 10 years. A freshman student at the Bicol University, he used to imitate his brother in drawing animé characters and tried his hand in animé and card games.

He started joining poster-making contests in high school but claimed that he hardly won in any.

Joining last month’s art exhibit was the greatest achievement of his life as a teenager, Lopo said.

He said his painting, titled “Wounded,” was highly inspired by his aunt, to whom he dedicated his work.

“I’m his favorite nephew, [and] I pity her in her situation. She suffered so much when she stayed at the hospital for more than a month because of a brain malfunction. I can’t fully remember what her exact sickness was. All I can recall is that she couldn’t remember anything after she had taken assorted medicines to prolong her life,” he said.

Lopo conveyed this pain and bitterness in his painting. He also attributed this to the pain and struggles that any other woman experienced.

Lopo is a cartoonist of “Hablondawani,” the official publication of the CSCDI-sponsored youth group. His work served as banner painting of the exhibit.

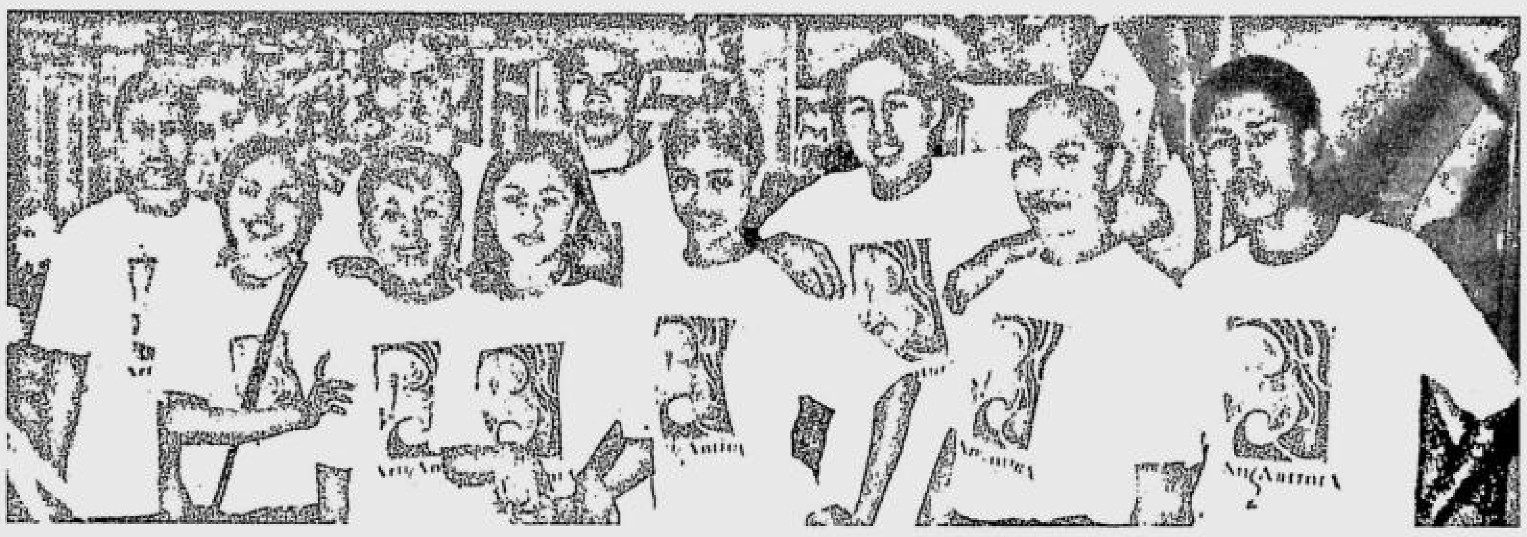
Father

Maybelle Berjuega, 18, is taking up dressmaking at the City Schools Division’s Non-Formal Education Pilot Center. She dreams of becoming a popular painter, saying that her talent is a precious gift that heaven has endowed her with and needs to be nurtured so that she can glorify God and touch other people through her works.

Berjuega was still a baby when her father left their family. She has not seen him since.

“I used to think of my father, but later I decided to just paint to ward off the thought of what he had done,” she said.

Her painting, titled “Ditan na Kuta” (Near Death), expressed her haunting experience when she almost drowned in the sea.



CSCDI artist-beneficiaries (first row) Juvelyn Villaflor (left), Mary France Nicol (3rd from left) and Maybelle Berjuega (center); (second row, from left) Ma. Nerissa Bonon, Mae Lynden Acosta, Henny Ray Daet, Baby Jhun Magracia, Mark Paul Dayto and Jason Lopo. They are joined by fellow CSCDI beneficiaries at the front row.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CSCDI

Fisherman’s son

Henny Ray Daet, 17, a son of a fisherman, portrays the simple life and aspirations of a fisherman in his works. He has been a CSCDI beneficiary for 10 years. A recipient of the Artist of the Year Award in 2001 and 2002, he describes himself as a man who fears God and attests that God inspires him a lot.

He studies at the Aquinas University College of Engineering where he also works as a student assistant.

His painting is titled “El Pescador,” a Spanish word for fisherman. He said his father inspired him to do this peculiar art work.

Maria Nerissa Bonon, 19, was the first CSCDI beneficiary to win an international award in painting.

In June last year, she went to Kansas City in the United States as one of two official delegates to the International Youth Conference. Her work won third place and was shown in an art exhibit there.

Bonon attributed the development of her talent to the CSCDI through art contests and sessions she had joined with equally talented sponsored kids.

“Of course, I was intimidated by my colleagues because all of them are professionals. But my friends and co-CSCDI beneficiaries encouraged me,” Bonon said.

Her painting, titled “Unfolding Existence,” shows the struggles and pains she has experienced.

At 18, Mae Lynden Acosta, was already considered a professional artist of Arte Lansangan, an art exhibit she joined at the Pacific Mall last year.

Her teachers and barangay officials discovered her when she started joining poster-making contests.

The Munting Guhit art group also honored her as Artist of the Year. Acosta has consistently won art contests, bringing home laurels to her family.

She is determined to become a renowned artist someday, that’s why she gives her best in her paintings and any worthy endeavor. Her “Obra Maestra” focuses on nature.

“I earnestly believe that when God created us, what He had in mind was for us to obey and love Him unconditionally, and one of the concrete ways of doing so is by taking good care of and preserving our environment. A person who loves nature and has a burning passion to preserve it is a man of peace—living a lively, interesting and colorful life. This is a painting that I wholeheartedly dedicate to Mother Earth to honor her through art,” she said.

Cancer

Mark Paul Dayto, 19, has been with the CSCDI family for 15 years. Because of his diligence in school, he has been granted a CSCDI college scholarship.

He used to attend art sessions when he was in grade school, but because of financial constraints, he was not able to finish them.

Dayto considers his talent an outlet for suppressed emotions.

“I cannot believe that our five months’ training and sessions would enable us to present our diverse paintings to the public, and that some people recognized our work . . . especially if I show my suppressed emotions,” he said.

His art work is titled “Cancer in New Form.” He gave a new form to Cancer by drawing the legs of a crab and four stars in a round shape. He dedicated his work to Cancer—in search of love and harmony. Red, its dominant color, symbolizes passion and intense emotion.

Masks

Dreaming of becoming a successful teacher someday, Mary France Nicol, 16, has been a CSCDI beneficiary for 13 years.

She draws inspiration from her family when she paints. Her favorite painting is titled “Kulayang Maskara.”

“It’s about different masks with varied shapes. We can perceive from them the different expressions, attitudes and characteristics of a person. Realizing that each of us has been created, nurtured and developed in many ways, we can appreciate the essence of our own uniqueness [sic] and the excitement of knowing that one is different from the other. How boring our world would become if the [people] living in it were the same as I am!” she said.

Baby Jhun Magarcia, 17, is a freshman at the Bicol University, taking BS Electronics.

He wants to finish college so that he would easily find job and help his parents and siblings. He believes that the art exhibit would help him continue his studies and realize his dreams soon.

He finds painting easy while listening to rock music. His weird imaginations and nightmares serve as sources of inspiration, when he conceptualizes for his works.

His painting is titled “Attraction.”

“I was able to do it because of a dream I had one night. In that dream, I saw two people facing each other with a piece of wood between the faces. Two human beings caught a glimpse of each other and, from that moment on, stared at each other. It’s hard to determine whether the persons staring at each other are male, female, gay or lesbian. For me, it means that when we meet people, we need to get to know them more than their physical attributes or sexual orientation,” he said.

Juvelyn Villaflor, 19, aspires to become successful in both career and family. Because of her good social skills, she has become one of the most sought-after facilitators during CSCDI youth camps and other youth program activities.

“Generally my paintings talk about journeys and struggles in life,” she said.

The title of her favorite painting is “Trip.” It’s about people’s journey in life—with its ups and downs. She said she was happy to have realized that she was not traveling alone.

“I am fascinated with people of different personalities and whom I have met and journeyed hand in hand with in this beautiful thing called life,” she said.

Next plan

Morcoso said the CSCDI planned to continue the art lessons among its beneficiaries so that they could reach a higher level of painting.

Aside from oil pastel, she said, they were planning to train the beneficiaries in oil and other media.

At least two or more CSCDI delegates might be sent to international painting conferences.

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GMA sees tie-up between terror groups, drug rings

From page A1

tinue to play a key role in this campaign," she told the PAF.

In Marawi, Ms Macapagal praised the commitment of Muslim communities to vigilance and action against illegal drugs, and urged them to extend their vigilance to all urban centers nationwide.

"As this effort should be nonpartisan, it should not be divided by ethnic or religious lines. Every Filipino must own this campaign," she said.

But the crackdown on illegal drugs is bound to fail if the government does not allow the execution of convicted drug traffickers, according to PDEA deputy director Rodolfo Caisip.

"It's in the law. Those who deserve to be executed should be executed," Caisip said in a press conference.

He said the arrest and imprisonment of drug pushers, and the affirmation of their conviction by the Supreme Court, would be "useless" if the death penalty would not be carried out.

Along this line, Rep. Augusto Syjuco (Lakas, Iloilo) said the drug menace was "at its worst and should be addressed forcefully."

Syjuco proposed the beheading of convicted drug lords and financiers in House Bill No. 6185, which seeks to amend in part the Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

Under current laws, people convicted of capital offenses, including drug trafficking, are put to death by lethal injection.

More mouths to feed

Caisip said the moratorium on executions that the President imposed last year would only cramp prisons nationwide and give rise to more problems for the government.

"The government will just have more mouths to feed. Many of [the drug traffickers] are not even Filipinos," he said.

As of November last year, there were 44 drug convicts among the 997 prisoners on death row.

Caisip said the exodus of drug traffickers from China to the Philippines was a vital problem that resulted from the weak enforcement of the death penalty law.

PRESIDENT Macapagal tries the local lanzones during her visit to Pikit, North Cotabato, Tuesday. RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

He said China's stringent measures against illegal drugs had prompted drug syndicates to seek refuge in other countries.

If local drug pushers were in China, "they might just be shot in the head," he said.

"But we don't do that here because ours is a democracy and our culture is different from China's," he added.

Caisip, however, called for patience and urged the public not to resort to extrajudicial means to neutralize drug pushers and users.

He said that while vigilante-style executions would reduce the number of people involved in illegal drugs, their results would not be effective in the long term.

Compelling and needed

In his proposed bill, Syjuco said he was an "opponent of the death penalty but believes that a drastic measure against the drug problem is now compelling and needed."

"The drug problem in the country has assumed a very alarming proportion," he said. "It is a menace that kills in a recidivist manner and destroys millions of life, mostly ... the youth."

HB 6185 defines a drug lord as "any person who operates a drug syndicate, finances its operation and manages its trade and transactions in the Philippines through local or international sources, counterparts and collaboration."

The proposed bill does not specify how the beheading of drug traffickers should be carried out.

But Syjuco stressed that providing for such beheading would ensure "our children's and youth's future, and of our nation as a whole."

The proposal is expected to be opposed vigorously by human rights advocates for being cruel and inhuman.

Several years ago, lawmakers proposed cutting off the penises of convicted rapists as a means to curb rape. The proposal got nowhere.

Citing data from the PDEA, Syjuco noted that there were now 3.4 million drug users in the country.

He also said that at least 13 transnational drug syndicates and 175 drug rings were active nationwide.

Advice only

Interior Secretary Joey Lina told the INQUIRER that he would meet with Alfredo Lim this week to discuss possible areas of cooperation in the campaign against illegal drugs.

Lina said he would seek Lim's views on matters related to the campaign, but stressed that the former Manila mayor's role would be limited to advising and that all actual anti-drug efforts would be handled by the PDEA, as provided for by Republic Act 9165 (or the Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002).

According to Lina, the PDEA is the sole operating arm of the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) responsible for the execution of anti-drug laws.

He said all other law enforcement bodies were subordinated to the PDEA when it came to anti-drug operations.

The DDB is appealing to private hospital owners to help the Department of Health by setting up rehabilitation wards for a growing number of drug dependents.

Interior Undersecretary and DDB member Agnes de Vanadera told the INQUIRER that the board was soliciting the help of the private sector because of the government's limited resources. She said the resources of the DOH, the agency responsible for the rehabilitation of drug dependents, was limited to the maintenance of existing rehab centers. *With a report from Nelson F. Flores*

Police still in the dark on Go Teng Kok ambush

From page A1

ferred late Tuesday to the St. Luke's Medical Center (SLMC) in Quezon City after undergoing emergency surgery at the Ospital ng Maynila.

"We are still preparing our witnesses so they can give accurate details on the crime and its perpetrators," Bulaong said.

In Malacañang, President Macapagal-Arroyo condemned the attempt on Go's life and ordered a thorough investigation.

"We shall bring the perpetrators to justice. Rogue justice has no place in our society," she said in a statement.

Stable condition

Jeff Salindong, SLMC assistant manager for public affairs, told the INQUIRER that Go's vital signs were stable. He refused to divulge further information, saying the patient's family had instructed the hospital staff to withhold details.

But Dr. Jose Raul Canlas, chief of the Philippine Center for Sports Medicine, reported that Go underwent another critical operation yesterday to remove a bullet fragment near his spinal cord.

Canlas said Go was still at the intensive care unit but was in stable condition.

He said the bullet fragment was "soft lead," and was reportedly located by the surgeons just two centimeters from Go's spinal cord.

Go's staff at the Patafa offices said he was giving instructions through writing because his tongue was injured in the attack.

Go, 58, was driving a black Mitsubishi Adventure and preparing to park outside the Patafa offices at the Rizal Memorial Complex in Manila when an armed man opened fire at close range. Another man on a motorcycle acted as a lookout.

Go sustained three wounds in the face, with the bullets exiting at two points on his left cheek.

A powerful member of the Philippine Olympic Committee Go was earlier reportedly linked to a convicted drug pusher and figured in publicized feuds with other sports officials.

Sympathy messages

Track and field sponsors from abroad have sent messages of sympathy to Go by fax or phone, according to the Patafa.

Maurice Nicholas, secretary general of the Asian Athletics Association (AAA), expressed sadness over what happened and asked to be advised of Go's condition every now and then.

In a letter, International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF) vice president Lou Dapeng said: "Today I learnt with great shock of the atrocious shooting... I and my wife sincerely wish him a speedy recovery. We are convinced that with the help of your advanced medical service, he will soon recover ... We look forward to seeing him in Paris."

Dapeng was referring to the world championships and elections of the IAAF council, where Go is planning to run as a candidate late in August.

AAA vice president Lou Chaoyi said he was "astonished" to learn about the shooting and expressed anxiety over Go's health.

Chaoyi also said Go's involvement was "indispensable" in the IAAF general congress in August and the AAA championships in Manila in September.

Others who phoned the Patafa office to extend their sympathies were Sri Lankan athletics secretary general Prema Pinewaleh, AAA council member and Brunei athletics chief K. Varghese, Singapore athletics head and AAA legal adviser Lohleng Kok and IAAF council member park Jung Ki of Korea. *With an AP report*

100-kph road sex . . .

From page A1

sex with a blonde hitchhiker sitting astride him when he drove his car into a road sign.

But only because he fled the scene of the accident with his naked accomplice.

"The man was convicted of hit-and-run and sentenced to a fine of 600 euros ($690)," court spokesperson Juergen Mannebeck said.

"It's hard to believe but in fact no law was broken with the intercourse on the motorway. It's a situation lawmakers never thought about."

The 23-year-old man, who was tracked down through the car's registration, was also ordered to pay 400 euros ($460) to repair the sign. He did not know the name of the woman who left her clothes behind in the car. *Reuters*

NDF rejects JDV's peace overtures

From page A1

ties drafted their own versions of a joint statement regarding the resumption of the talks but could not reconcile their differences "to their mutual satisfaction."

The United States and several EU countries have tagged as terrorist organizations the Communist Party of the Philippines; the NPA, its armed wing; and the NDF, the communist umbrella group.

On Saturday, Bello said the government could not just tell the United States and the European Union to take off the CPP, NPA and NDF from their blacklist. Such a move by the Philippines, he explained, would constitute intervention in the foreign policy of these countries.

Bello, Tarlac Gov. Jose Yap and Norberto Gonzales, presidential adviser for special concerns, accompanied De Venecia in his peace mission.

Representing the communist rebels in the exploratory talks were Luis Jalandoni, chief NDF negotiator; Jose Ma. Sison, CPP founder and NDF political consultant; and Fidel Agcaoili, an NDF official.

According to the source, members of De Venecia's mission asked the NDF representatives about the recent attacks by the NPA. The NDF negotiators pointed out that government forces were also launching military offensives against the guerrillas.

"We have no ceasefire agreement in the first place so that's just that," the source acknowledged.

The official said that the government's draft statement contained only a "joint commitment to resume talks under the aegis of the Norwegian government."

NO WAY JOSE. Communist Party of the Philippines founding chair Jose Ma. Sison shows document to Speaker Jose de Venecia in this photo taken at The Hague on March 16, 1998. The two Joses failed to reach an agreement in their latest meeting. AP

The Norwegian government, which brokered the last round of talks in Oslo, is trying to bring the two sides back to the negotiating table.

The government suspended peace talks in 2001 after NPA assassins killed Rodolfo Aguinaldo, a former governor and congressman of Cagayan, in connection with human rights violations that he had committed while he served in the military.

When the United States and the European Union last year blacklisted the CPP, NPA and NDF, and campaigned to cut support to the rebels, the communist guerrillas stepped up attacks.

During the past couple of weeks, NPA rebels launched a string of surprise attacks that had killed at least 29 government troops. At least 13 soldiers were killed Monday in Compostela Valley in a clash with about 80 guerrillas. Last week, rebels killed 11 militiamen, five soldiers, and a soldier's wife in a remote Army camp on the island of Samar.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said Tuesday she was concerned by the attacks, which she said were meant to exploit the country's over-stretched defenses as the military battled Moro rebels in Mindanao.

Ms Macapagal instructed a Cabinet security committee to redeploy troops "to meet the many-sided threat."

On Wednesday, Ms Macapagal said the government would bring evidence of communist rebel links with terrorist groups before international courts and venues to curtail the flow of funds to the insurgents.

Links to terror groups

"As we move against NPA units, we shall step up legal action against all personalities of the NDF ostensibly engaged in democratic struggle but clandestinely leading and abetting the overthrow of government by force and violence," the President said in a speech at the 56th anniversary of the Philippine Air Force.

"I'm also directing the government peace panel in prospective peace talks with the MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front) to take up the matter of reported tactical alliances between the NDF and the NPA and put an end to it. We will combine all necessary measures to stop this threat and defeat it by the use of force, political action and long-term social reforms," she said.

Malacañang yesterday released copies of a supposed 1999 agreement between the NDF and the MILF to coordinate their attacks against government forces. The nine-page document showed the tactical alliance was forged on July 4, 1999 following talks held at the MILF's Camp Abubakar on July 22-23, 1999.

"It is in the best interest of the Filipino and Moro peoples and the two liberation fronts that we concentrate our blows against the common enemy, take advantage of common and mutually beneficial struggles and foster relations based on mutual respect and recognition for each other's integrity, principles, aspirations and objectives," the agreement said.

"By so doing, we further advance our just revolutionary struggles, promote the interests of our people and frustrate the enemy's divide-and-rule tactics of fomenting mistrust and animosity between the Filipino and Moro peoples and the two liberation fronts," it added.

Listed as signatories for the "NDFP delegation panel" were Ali Maglaya as panel chief, with Jorge Madlos and Ernie Magdiwang as panel members. Their MILF counterparts were Muhammad Yusop as panel head, with Salman Hassan and Abu Leilah as members.

A supplementary agreement outlined the "relations between the NDF and the MILF lower levels and between the NPA and the Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces and in areas where they exercise their respective political authority and influence."

Rosal statement

CPP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said the government "could no longer contain the swelling rise of the people's revolutionary consciousness."

Rosal said the NPA would only stop its attacks following the signing of a ceasefire agreement between the NDF and the government. The truce, he said, would come after the conclusion of the peace talks and not before.

The leftist Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said Ms Macapagal should not be surprised that her troops were meeting stiff resistance from the NPA.

"She wants all-out war, then all-out war is what she'll get," Bayan spokesperson Teodoro A. Casiño said. *With reports by Amy R. Remo and Delfin T. Mallari/PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Confessed bomber cries, seeks forgiveness

From page A1

gation interpreter Onos Mangotara for the DOJ panel.

"(Yunos) doesn't want to stay in jail . . . He gets bored. He wants to die immediately so that he will no longer think about it (bombing)," Mangotara said.

Yunos said he had a wife and family in Mindanao but "they don't understand us who undertake jihad (holy war)."

"I admit that that I was mistaken and yes, I ask for forgiveness (from the victim's families)," Yunos said.

Asked what he wanted to say to them, Yunos said: "I can't say anything because I'm not rich. If I were rich, I would give money. I can't bring them back."

His accomplice, Indonesian Fathur Rohman al-Ghozi, stared at him, somewhat bewildered, as Yunos wept while looking at pictures of the bombing victims.

Yunos has been charged with mutiple murder, mutiple frustrated murder, and multiple attempted murder in the Manila Regional Trial Court.

Al-Ghozi, who also admitted to planning and carrying out the bombing blitz, might be charged next week with the same crimes. He submitted yesterday a supplementary sworn statement affirming his earlier statements and Yunos' confession that they planned the bombing.

Al-Ghozi was convicted last year on charges of illegal possession of explosives and sentenced to 17 years in prison.

No MILF order

Yunos, however, denied at the hearing that an MILF commander ordered him to wage a terror campaign in Metro Manila. He said only he and Al-Ghozi did the planning.

Even so, Yunos admitted that the MILF had ordered him to bomb a transmission line of the National Power Corp. in March. Yunos was arrested in May.

State Prosecutor Peter Ong, who conducted the hearing, said he would stick with the written sworn statement that Yunos submitted earlier. In that document, Yunos said he was a member of the MILF's Special Operations Group.

Ong said Yunos also claimed that Alim Pangalian Solaiman, his alleged superior in the MILF 3rd Field Division, had given him a "direct order" to proceed with the bombings. Solaiman allegedly said the order came from MILF chief Salamat Hashim.

CONFESSED bomber Muklis Yunos wipes his tears after being shown gory photos of victims of the Dec. 30, 2000 Rizal Day train bombing.

RANDY HORMILLOSA

WRECKAGE of LRT train 1037 at the Blumenttrit station after the Dec. 30, 2000 bombing where 22 people died.

ERIK ARAZAS

"I don't think he can deny what he has signed and submitted before me. Anyway, that's the only thing that is a bit inconsistent right now. He still admitted that he is part of the planning of the Dec. 30 bombings," Ong said.

"I think Muklis even admitted in his sworn statement that he conducted reconnaissance operations at the Naia (Ninoy Aquino International Airport), US Embassy, and I think somewhere in Makati then Cavite," Ong added.

Solaiman, Al-Ghozi and six other persons might be charged next week "if the evidence warrants" and they could face a maximum penalty of "multiple death" for the carnage they had perpetrated, Ong said.

Among the other six who could be charged are Jemaah Islamiya leaders Riduan Isamuddin (better known as Hambali) and Abubakar Bafana Faiz, a Malaysian. They funded the terror campaign, Ong added.

Plot recounted

This was how Ong recounted the details of the bombing according to Yunos' statement:

Ong said that Yunos and Al-Ghozi met in Cebu sometime in "October and November 2000" while they were looking for explosives. Yunos learned that Al-Ghozi had links to the JI and he asked that the Southeast Asian terror network support the MILF's own "jihad program."

Ong said Al-Ghozi relayed the request to Hambali and Faiz and the JI agreed to send logistics support.

On Dec. 1, 2001, Hambali and Faiz allegedly arrived in Manila and met with Yunos and Al-Ghozi to oversee the bombings.

Ong said a Malaysian Airlines passenger manifest showed that the two JI leaders did arrive in Manila on that day. The two left on Dec. 6. Faiz was arrested in Singapore in December 2002 after a crackdown on militants.

Philippine National Bank statements of accounts also showed that P129,000 was wired to Yunos and Al-Ghozi on Dec. 20, or 10 days before the bombing. Two months later, another P129,000 was deposited from a Malaysian bank on Feb. 20, 2001.

Yunos and Al-Ghozi then shipped 30 kilos of explosives from Cebu to Manila on board a Super Ferry. Ong said Yunos and Al-Ghozi prepared the "grenade" while Al-Ghozi assembled the timing device.

Ong added the two first planned to bomb the US Embassy but later decided on Plaza Ferguson. On that fateful day, the two also planted bombs in a bus in Cubao, Quezon City, outside the Dusit Hotel in Makati, and inside the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Ong said a female witness identified Yunos as the person who told her to get off the LRT train at the Tayuman station. The bomb exploded when the LRT carriage arrived at its next stop, the Blementritt station. *With reports from AP and AFP*

Fortich, bishop of the poor and the oppressed, dies at 89

From page A1

"His courage will always be remembered. The Church is blessed for having a valiant pastor like Bishop Fortich," Sin said in a message. "I am sure that wherever he is, he will continue to intercede for us, so that genuine justice and peace may dwell on our land."

Fortich was admitted at the RMC Intensive Care Unit on April 28 when he complained of difficulty of breathing and had been surviving on a respirator since. He was transferred to a private room of the hospital on May 16 where he died yesterday. He suffered a mild stroke in November.

"He was unconscious since Tuesday last week. It was a painless death," Araneta said.

Church burial

Msgr. Victorino Rivas, Vicar General of the Diocese of Bacolod, said Fortich's remains would be brought to the San Sebastian Cathedral where the wake will be held until his burial on July 15.

As has been the custom of the Catholic Church, Fortich will be buried within the Cathedral. His coffin will be ensconced at the wall close to the altar, adjoining the burial places of two other Bacolod bishops—Monsignors Casimiro Lladoc and Emmanuel Yap.

The president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, Cotabato Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, described Fortich as "a great disciple of Christ, a faithful messenger of the gospel of love and justice, vigorous defender of the poor."

He "was very much a part of the prophetic voice of the bishops' conference. His life and ministry testified to building a Catholic Church to be a church of the poor," the CBCP said in a statement.

Negros Occidental Gov. Joseph Marañon said Fortich "exemplified the character of a true pastor of the church."

For establishing a cooperative that runs a sugar central to help poor sugar planters, Fortich received the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service in 1973.

Nobel Prize nominee

He was also nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1982 for championing the cause of the poor at the height of the Marcos dictatorship.

Even after he retired in 1989, Fortich remained at the forefront of the fight against poverty in his province. Two years ago, even when he was ailing from complications from diabetes, he still joined the protest rally against moves to amend the Constitution.

"The work for the poor is not excluded from the package of retirement," Fortich had said when he retired in 1989.

Last year, when he turned 89, the prelate said: "I am happy. I have no regrets. I have seen the work I have done is bearing fruit, especially among the masses."

He was the eldest child of Ignacio Fortich, a Spanish mestizo, and Rosalia Yapsutco, a half-Chinese. He was born on Aug. 11, 1913, at the Silliman University Hospital in Dumaguete. The Fortich family owned land in Sibulan, Negros Oriental, which was planted to rice, corn and sugar.

"My mother had a free clinic in the hacienda for the workers, and that gave me the idea that I wanted to serve the people when I grew up," Fortich had said.

In 1933, Fortich went to Manila to study at the Jesuit-run San Jose Seminary. He was ordained priest on March 4, 1944.

Fortich served the Bacolod diocese throughout his priestly life, broken by his one year and eight months assignment as parish priest of Binalbagan, Negros Occidental in 1949.

Church movements

In the 1960s, he became the charismatic leader of two Church movements—the Barangay sang Virgen (Community of Family of the Virgin) that catered to the poor, and the Cursillo (A Short Course on Christianity). His involvement with these groups earned him the reputation of being a friend of the rich and poor.

In 1966, he was named national chaplain of the Barangay sang Virgen, after it began to spread from the Diocese of Bacolod to practically all over the country.

Fortich was named bishop of Bacolod on Feb. 24, 1967 following the death of Bishop Immanuel Yap on Oct. 16, 1966. His first act was to call on sugar planters to give just wages to their workers. He stressed the workers' right to organize unions.

A controversial pastoral letter he issued in 1969 brought attention to the plight of the farm workers, especially the *sacada* (seasonal workers). The message lost him friends and supporters.

Unfazed, Fortich went on to create the Church Social Action Committee to make the diocese responsive to the needs of the time. By the 1970s, the diocese saw the flowering of social action programs and the poor in Negros found in the Church a new ally for their survival.

BCCs

Despite the danger of being called a communist, Fortich instituted the process of empowerment by adopting the Latin American experience of building Basic Christian Community (BCCs) that advocated active non-violence, grew in militancy in opposing human rights violations, proposed land reform, and challenged the laws of the Marcos regime.

Fortich also put church property under land reform, started a legal aid scheme to help the poor, and set up a radio and television station.

In the early 1980s, as the plight of the poor worsened with the sugar industry reeling from its plunder during the Marcos years, Fortich continued to be the outspoken champion of their rights. The international media quoted him extensively and among his famous quotes was his description of Negros: "We are sitting on a social volcano which could erupt anytime."

Papal visit

Fortich was ridiculed by the rich and powerful for bringing to the attention of the world the starving and malnourished children of Negros. But one of his biggest triumphs was to get Pope John Paul II to make a side trip to Negros Occidental during his visit to the Philippines in 1981.

"I told Cardinal Sin the Pope does not just want to see the scenery at Mayon Volcano; he wants to see the problems of the people," Fortich had then said.

Fortich, believing in the need for peaceful change, became national co-chair of the National Ceasefire Committee to pursue provincial and regional peace talks with the communists. It was also in the late 1980s that a strong anti-insurgency campaign was launched in Negros and rightist groups charged Fortich and his priests with being pro-communist.

A little after midnight on April 28, 1987, a grenade was thrown on the landing near the door of Fortich's room, leaving steel fragments everywhere.

Fortich survived the incident and remained an outspoken advocate of human rights. For what was seen as his controversial and unwavering stand for the needy, Fortich was retired before being promoted to archbishop.

But even after retirement, he had continued to speak in behalf of the poor.

Two years ago, when asked when he would stop championing causes, Fortich had said: "When the country attains peace, because that will mean that the needs of the poor will have been answered." *With reports from Blanche S. Rivera and Juliet L. Javellana in Manila*

RADYO BOMBO
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CITY
LIVE COVERAGE
BY
RADYO VERITAS BACOLOD
DYAF

BISHOP Fortich joins protest calling for the ouster of President Estrada in 2001.

PDI PHOTO

LATE SPORTS

Coca-Cola beats TNT

By June Navarro

THE SWELTERING heat inside the Cuneta Astrodome worked on Coca-Cola's favor as the defending champion Tigers swamped Talk N Text, 93-79, and took Game 1 of the Samsung-PBA All Filipino Cup Finals last night.

"It was very hot but the good thing was it didn't affect our shooting. Instead, the heat contributed badly to game of Talk N Text," said Coca-Cola coach Chot Reyes.

Jeffrey Cariaso put up a one-man offensive show in the pivotal minutes for the Tigers, pumping in 13 of his team-high 19 points that scorched the listless Phone Pals in the end.

"Our shooting allowed us to open up the defense of Talk N Text. It enabled us to penetrate inside and make those important shots," said Reyes.

That's aside from limiting man-mountain Asi Taulava from getting enough entry passess inside the paint that told heavily on the Phone Pals offensive strategy.

"To tell you the truth we just played honest to goodness defense. Nothing really special. We just pressured them and disrupted their rhythm," said Reyes.

Jimmy Alapag lost his battle in the backcourt opposite Johnny Abarrientos, completely failing to feed those much-needed assists to Taulava.

The Phone Pals will try to even up matters tomorrow in Game 2 of their best-of-seven series at the Araneta Coliseum.

With seven players scoring in double figures, Alaska blasted Sta. Lucia Realty, 102-79, to clinch third place.

L. Paredes; 72

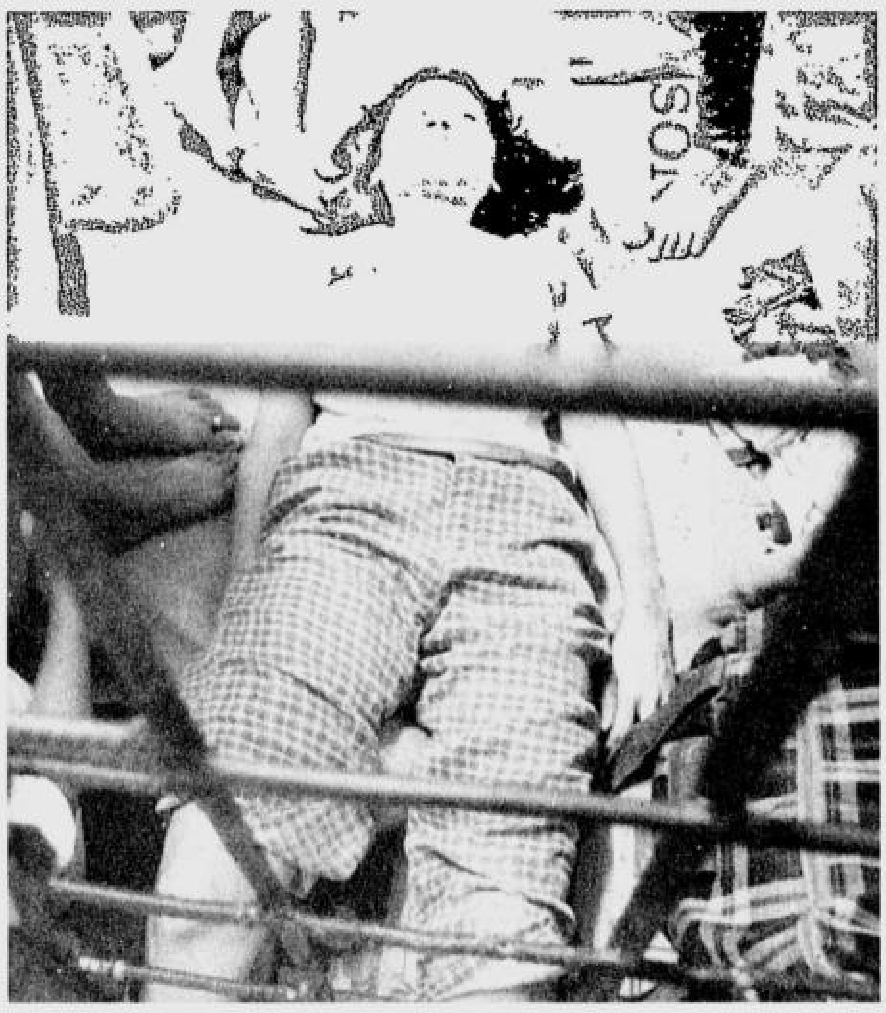
LIWAYWAY De la Cruz, a retired social worker and widow of the late journalist Amante F. Paredes, died Wednesday of a lingering disease. She was 72.

She is survived by children, Joel, Ma. Dulce, Emmanuel, Divina, Ralph and Mary Jane; son-in-law Rollie Tadena; daughters-in-law Merci, Atiek and Lilet; brother Alberto de la Cruz; sisters Dalisay Samson and Ligaya Umadhay; and grandchildren.

She started her career as a child welfare specialist with the Department of Social Welfare, and retired with the Christian Children's Fund.

Her body lies at the St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish, Chapel 4, 1st Humabon Street, Magallanes Village, Makati City.

Interment will be on July 5, at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City, after the 8:30 a.m. Mass.



'LOW BATT'
Alleged cat burglar Maricel Balabayo of Cubao lies unconscious inside the detention cell of the Central Police District Station 6 after the "amulet" that would have given her supernatural powers failed to work and led to her arrest.
JOAN BONDOC

'Police zone'

Cop deployment in U-belt an overkill, say students

By Jerome Aning

MILITANT students are up in arms over what they regard as the transformation of Manila's University Belt into a "police zone."

The National Union of Students of the Philippines expressed "extreme distress" over the massive deployment of policemen in various universities along C.M. Recto Avenue.

"While we laud the objective of leading the youth and students away from harm induced by drug addiction, we can't help but complain that this campaign has led to some unacceptable and deplorable consequences," said Raymond Palatino, NUSP president.

He described the police deployment as "an overkill and acceptable only in a police state."

Palatino added that from the time the government identified the Universtiy Belt as a drug "hotspot," the academic atmosphere in the country's university town was "disrupted" by the presence of numerous lawmen in the area.

"Policemen are dizzyingly visible on every street and nook," he said. "They are even manning the entrance gates of schools. Police on patrol make rounds every now and then."

He said that students are intimidated by the M-16 rifles and other high-caliber firearms which the lawmen carry while patrolling Recto and adjacent streets.

Palatino said that "the de facto militarization of the U-Belt does not bode well for the education of the students (because) it heightens the repressive character of schools located here, whose penal-like security measures are anathema to a liberal education."

"We fear (that) the abnormal police presence in the area will soon desensitize and condition the behavior of students to submission," the NUSP president added.

The student leader also claimed that the government's latent aim in its anti-drug war in the university belt is "to control the student population in the place where traditionally peoples' protest marches against the government are held."

Palatino hinted that the Western Police District should be faulted for the proliferation of drugs in the U-Belt.

"It would be beneficial to the public if the government would first conduct a morality check and exhaustive re-examination of all police personnel," he said.

Fed up, LRTA raps former consultant

By Abigail Ho

IT IS now their turn to file a case.

The Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA), its foreign and local consultants and two contractors are preparing to file criminal charges against former Metro Manila LRT Consultants (MMLRTC) deputy general manager Roberto Gualberto for allegedly tainting their reputation.

Gualberto last week filed with the Office of the Ombudsman two counts of graft against LRTA Administrator Teodoro Cruz Jr., LRT Line 2 project manager Enrico Garcia, LRT Line 2 assistant project manager Elmer Surbano, MMLRTC project manager Masaharo Takano, and Sumitomo Corp. project manager Makato Awakihara.

Gualberto accused them of awarding the contract for its management information system that was allegedly overpriced by P43 million and of approving the purchase of a P175-million grinding machine for the LRT Line 2 when it was not yet needed.

But Cruz denied that the LRTA board had approved the purchase of a rail grinding machine saying he had no knowledge of it.

"With deliberate malice, Mr. Gualberto perjured himself when he misrepresented the documents in his possession to make it appear that there were irregularities in the LRT Line 2 project," Cruz and the other complainants said in a statement yesterday.

Acacia trees already dying, QC developer says

By Leila Salaverria

THE CENTURY-OLD acacia trees that Jamby Madrigal is trying to save are already dying, according to an official of Dolmar Property Ventures Inc.

The company is under fire from Madrigal for cutting down trees on a piece of property in New Manila, Quezon City to give way to a townhouse project.

Dolmar General Manager Jose Zulueta said a forester from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources had attested that the acacia trees the company wanted to cut down were already dying.

He also denied that his company was the developer of the Cherry Hills subdivision in Antipolo, where hundreds of residents were killed when some of the houses collapsed because of floods and landslides.

Zulueta said the reference has been detrimental to the company's image.

"Dolmar has never suffered from a bad reputation," he said in an interview. "In fact, (the firm) also helps the environment by planting a lot of trees in the properties it develops."

In the case of the New Manila development, Dolmar claimed that only Madrigal and her supporters, and not the residents of Barangay Mariana, were opposing their cutting down of trees. He denied that Dolmar had never coordinated with the barangay in their construction. He showed the INQUIRER copies of two clearances signed by barangay chair Regina "Bong" San Miguel. The clearances, which Zulueta said were even posted in the barangay hall, gave Dolmar permission to cut down trees and build townhouses on a 2,600-square meter property on 11th Street corner Doña Hemady Street.

Dolmar had acquired the property from the Madrigal clan in 2001, according to Zulueta.

Dolmar Senior Manager for Marketing Erwin Pineda said that the company had "followed each and every process" in seeking permission to cut down the trees in order to spare the company from being questioned.

He showed copies of all the tree cutting permits for six trees and the environmental compliance certificate which the DENR issued to the company.

To end the debate, Dolmar asked Madrigal if she would be willing to compromise, according to Pineda.

He said their meeting was held after June 13 when Madrigal's group stopped the tree-cutting.

Pineda said Madrigal had refused to compromise, insisting that the trees should not be felled even if they were standing on private property, which she does not own. Zulueta said that if they had given in to Madrigal's request, it would be impossible for Dolmar to construct townhouses in the area.

"The property is ours," Zulueta said. "If we want to cut down the trees to make way for homes, then we should be allowed to do that."

Zulueta also denied the report that Sixto Tolentino was a representative of Dolmar. He said Tolentino is a regional director of the DENR who gave the ECC to the company.

Traffic men to 'flash' motorists

CARD-BEARING traffic enforcers are the wave of the future, according to the Metro Manila Development Authority.

MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando said the traffic men would be issued flashcards that would contain road safety reminders for motorists and pedestrians.

He said the enforcers would no longer have to wave their arms around and gesture with their hands—something drivers and pedestrians would most likely not understand.

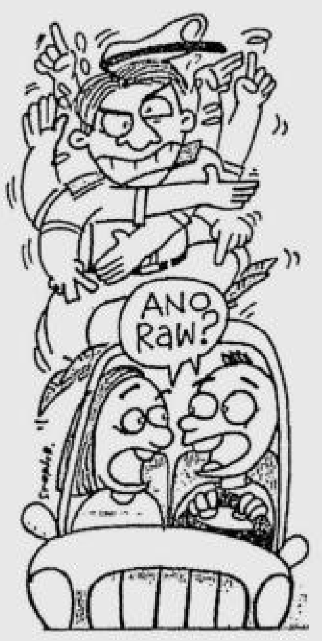
The cards containing different reminders would be contained in strapped transparent bags which the enforcers could wear around their necks if they get tired holding them up.

Fernando said that he could not be sure whether the enforcers accomplish anything with hand motions.

But with the signs, he said the MMDA men would be able to make the public understand and follow the traffic rules.

The flashcards would carry such messages like "bawal tumawid" (no crossing), "bawal magsakay" (no loading), and "dito ang tawiran" (this is the proper place to cross the street).

Fernando also said that holding up the signs would be better than having the traffic men shout their orders. *Leila Salaverria*



Crafty ATM robber falls

YOU LINE up to withdraw money from an automated teller machine. After the transaction, you get your ATM card back. A receipt is issued. You wait for your money, but the ATM fails to issue the cash.

You might just have been the latest victim of an ingenious robber.

Security guards of a Banco de Oro branch in Muntinlupa caught Roberto Fedilicio at about 8 p.m. on Tuesday and turned him over to police.

The guards had been watching Fedilicio, 31, for days after they received complaints from customers. They discovered that Fedilicio would put a thick plastic bag inside the cash dispenser to trap the bills that would come out when a customer withdraws money.

When the customer leaves, Fedilicio would go in and take the cash, PO3 Felix Paor said.
Edson Tandoc Jr.

How to win against the NPA

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THIRTEEN more soldiers were killed in an ambush by the New People's Army (NPA) in New Bataan, Compostela Valley, Monday. One of them was a young lieutenant, Peter James Angeles, a graduate of Philippine Military Academy (PMA) Class 2000.

Last week, 16 government troops and the wife of one of the soldiers were killed when NPA guerrillas attacked their camp in Oras, Eastern Samar.

There are probably other government casualties who have gone unreported because of their small numbers.

* * *

At the rate NPA guerrillas, Moro rebels and Abu Sayyaf terrorists are killing off government soldiers, there might only be a few left.

At the rate rank and file members of the Armed Forces are being decimated, the generals and colonels might no longer have men to command.

The Armed Forces should wake up from its lethargy!

* * *

The military should get rid of its excess fat. Excess fat—too many soldiers doing nothing and so many units duplicating the functions of others—is what's causing the lethargy.

If the Armed Forces wants to make itself an efficient fighting machine, it should form itself into battalion-size groups. The present set-up of divisions and brigades is too cumbersome.

A lean and mean military organization like the one they used to have in the 1950s will contribute to victories against the NPA, Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and Abu Sayyaf.

* * *

In the 1950s and early '60s, the Army's fighting units were composed of battalion combat teams (BCTs) which were very effective in fighting the Huks and Moro outlaws.

A BCT was headed by a lieutenant colonel who had everything he needed in the field—from tanks, cannons to small planes.

Each BCT operated autonomously, meaning the commander had full disposition of his men and equipment.

Since the BCT was a small unit—a maximum of 500 soldiers as compared to a brigade of 3,000 men—it was easy to control and was highly mobile.

* * *

The BCTs were very effective against Huk guerrillas who operated in small groups.

Divided into companies, platoons and squads, the BCTs moved around fast because there was only a small number of personnel. The small number of men made for easy management.

Brigades and divisions are difficult to control because of their big number. A division is composed of 6,000 to 10,000 troops.

* * *

What would be the use of excess generals and colonels who would be affected by the BCT set-up? The Armed Forces should retire them.

We are a very small country and yet we pattern our military organization after that of the US Armed Forces.

The US military suffered defeat at the hands of the North Vietnamese and Vietcong because it did not fight the communist guerrillas right down their alley. It fought guerrillas in a conventional warfare.

* * *

Guerrillas should be fought using their own kind of warfare.

Aside from fighting guerrillas in their own method and territory, the military should get the sympathy of people in remote areas who give refuge to the guerrillas.

The best way to win the hearts and minds of the barrio folk is to make them feel that the government has not abandoned them.

* * *

In the '50s Defense Secretary Ramon Magsaysay made the poor people in the barrios feel important by firing soldiers who were abusive.

One of the reasons the barrio folk sympathize with the NPAs, MILF and Abu Sayyaf is the failure of the Armed Forces to give immediate punishment to abusive soldiers.

Abusive policemen, corrupt judges and prosecutors contribute to the swelling ranks of the NPA. Most of the low-ranking NPA guerrillas are poor people who couldn't get justice from the government for their grievances.

* * *

But the best way to lick the insurgency problem is for the government to solve the problem of poverty.

And that, indeed, is a very difficult task.

It requires a Chief Executive who is an economist and not a politician or well-known personality. Politicians and actors have gotten this country nowhere.

* * *

I doff my hat to Noli de Castro for saying that he is not prepared to run the country yet. This means that he doesn't have presidential ambitions, just yet.

De Castro leads in poll surveys of possible presidential and vice presidential candidates.

Mabuti naman at may delicadeza ka pa, Kabayan!

* * *

But, on another matter, delicadeza De Castro has none because he continues to hold on to his highly popular TV program, "Magandang Gabi, Bayan."

He should have relinquished the program after he got elected senator.

No matter how his viewers want him there, he should have the delicadeza of relinquishing it because he cannot serve God and Mammon, so to speak.

Media play an adversarial role vis-à-vis the government. Noli de Castro wants to have his cake and eat it too.

METROBRIEFS

Casino employee abducted

AN EMPLOYEE of the Casino Filipino was abducted by three armed men in Ermita, Manila, on Monday night. Princess Palma, 32, of Alunan corner P. Ocampo streets, Malate was with her boyfriend, Rafael Malamag, when the abduction took place at 10:10 p.m. near the corner of Roxas Boulevard and J. Nakpil Street, Malate. Malamag, a casino table supervisor, told the police that the suspects, one of whom was armed with a pistol, forcibly dragged Palma into a car. ***Margaux Ortiz***

Personality dev't course

A SEMINAR on total personality development will be held July 2-5, at the Century Park Hotel. It will be conducted by Prof. Husain Rangwala, director of Advance Institute of Management, from 7 p.m. onwards. Among the topics to be discussed in the seminar are how to work effectively, time management and goal-setting, improving communication skills, overcoming inferiority complex, stress management, and interpersonal relations. Prof. Rangwala says the course will help participants understand the three stages of life—that is, dependence, independence and interdependence. Admission to the seminar is free.

Life for sexual abuse

A TWENTY-FOUR-YEAR-OLD construction worker will have a long time contemplating his rape of a 32-year-old woman after Judge Jose Mendoza of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court recently sentenced him to life imprisonment. Joseph Castillo was found guilty beyond reasonable doubt for raping the victim in front of her three children inside their house in Quezon City on March 25, 2001. Castillo had just come from a drinking spree with neighbors when he entered the woman's house at about 11 p.m. and found her sleeping in the living room with her three children. ***Amy Remo***

METRO

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Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

FOUR DIGIT
9 6 2 5
(In exact order)

SUERTRES
5 7 2

MEGALOTTO 6/45
5 6 12 18 23 43

BRUISED HANDS
The suspects in the killing of a Quezon City policeman show their bruised hands Tuesday at the jail bars of Station 6 in front of the Batasan complex where they are detained. The suspects, identified as Benjie Mallari, Benny Pagoay and Joel Clarito, also underwent a paraffin test. JOAN BONDOC

7 drug testing centers closed

By Nelson Flores

INTERIOR and Local Government Secretary Joey Lina yesterday asked Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit to shut down seven drug testing centers that had been found violating guidelines prescribed by the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB).

Lina identified the seven drug testing centers as One-Step Drug Testing, Drug Check, James Vann Diagnostic Center, Eureka Drug Testing, Cyber Drug Testing, Mahogany Drug Testing, and NCR-Bioscan Drug Testing.

He said the centers violated operating guidelines such as having running water in the urine collecting area and using unmarked testing kits.

Water could be used to dilute samples while unmarked testing kits could lead to confusion in determining the owners of urine samples.

In another instance, a refrigerator for the exclusive storage of samples had food and drinking water kept alongside the bottles of urine.

one of the centers was also being used as an insurance firm office and a driving school.

Lina said he conducted an inspection on Tuesday to see for himself "how things are going on at the drug testing centers."

According to him, the violations were so serious that he had no choice but to recommend the closure of the testing centers.

"Because of these kinds of violations, it is quite possible that many drug users and dependents were able to pass the drug test conducted by these testing centers," Lina said.

At the same time, Lina asked Dayrit to reduce the drug testing fee and make them "more reasonable."

Considering the present economic situation, it is difficult for an ordinary person to shell out P300 for drug testing, he pointed out. He added that the testing should not become an added burden to the people.

This developed as Lina directed provincial governors, city and town mayors to help the Department of Health monitor the drug testing centers in their areas.

OVER DEMOLITION ARGUMENT

2 top cops in near-gunfight

By Alcuin Papa

INSTEAD of keeping the peace, two ranking policemen shattered it yesterday when the two hotheads nearly had a gunfight over the demolition of illegal structures in Quezon City.

Senior Supt. Eduardo Ortilla, assigned to Camp Crame and Senior Supt. Filmore Balmaceda, chief of the Quezon City traffic police, had an altercation at about 1 p.m. yesterday along Commonwealth Avenue.

Witnesses said Balmaceda was supervising the demolition of illegal structures near the Batasan area. The demolition affected a structure in front of Ortilla's house on 109 Commonwealth Avenue.

Ortilla, who owned the structure to be demolished, then confronted Balmaceda.

The two almost came to blows but were pacified by their men.

Ortilla then entered his house to cool down, but Balmaceda followed him, apparently thinking that Ortilla was going for his gun.

Balmaceda then drew his gun and pointed it at Ortilla, according to witnesses. The officers' men again intervened.

Balmaceda denied to reporters that he drew his gun.

The two cops vowed to file charges against each other.

A walk against drugs

By Tina Santos

ENOUGH with the talk and let us walk the walk against illegal drugs.

That is the invitation of the Caloocan City government for residents to join the walk-for-a-cause against illegal drugs on July 9.

Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo said thousands of students, teachers, local government employees and members of non-governmental organizations were expected to participate in the march.

He said the "alay lakad" was Caloocan's way of showing its solidarity with "the government in its campaign against the drug menace."

Participants will gather in front of City Hall starting at 6 a.m. for the march that will take them through the city's streets.

TOYOTA

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THUNDER
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GOOD OL' TOYOTAS!

TOYOTA INTRODUCES

THUNDER SERVICE

Toyota welcomes out-of-warranty Toyota vehicles with the new Thunder Service.
Now, there are two good reasons why you should bring your good ol' Toyota to Toyota dealers.

AFFORDABLE. Authorized replacement parts exclusive to Thunder Service and a menu of services are budget-friendly so you can have your car fixed immediately.

COMMENDABLE SERVICE. Toyota-trained technicians at dedicated service bays guarantee expert attention.

Ask for Thunder Service at selected Toyota Service Centers today.

SAMPLE MENU PRICELIST (Parts and labor included)

CHANGE OIL & FILTER	
Corolla (Except Altis)	610-680
Corona	750
Camry (1996-2002)	715
Revo	710 - 1050
Tamaraw FX (Gasoline only)	710 - 730
Hi-Ace	985-1135
Hi-Lux	1135 - 1215

BRAKE PADS CHANGE	
Corolla / Corona (1989-1992)	1,110
Corolla 1992 up (Except Altis)	1,080
Camry / Corona EX Saloon, Exsior	1,680
Revo	1,580
Tamaraw FX	1,480
Hi-Ace	1,660
Hi-Lux	1,680

CLUTCH DISC REPLACEMENT	
Corolla (Except Altis)	3,235
Corona	3,405
Camry (1996-2002)	3,560
Revo	3,850
Tamaraw FX (Gas & Dsl)	3,660 - 4,880
Hi-Ace	4,795
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SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph
Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

GTK slay attempt alarms Fil-Chinese

By Roy Luarca

GO: Shot in broad daylight.

THE DAYLIGHT assassination attempt on athletics chief Go Teng Kok has alarmed the local Filipino-Chinese community.

"Before, we're just afraid of being kidnapped. Now, we cringe in fear of being killed," said a Binondo-based businesseman who requested anonymity.

"We have confidence in the law and we trust the police, but they must act swiftly so as to calm us down," he said. "If this (assassination attempt) can happen to a sports leader in broad daylight, it can happen to anybody."

Go, president of the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association, sustained two gunshot wounds in the right cheek when a lone gunman fired at him while he was about to park the Mitsubishi Adventure he was driving in front of the Patafa office at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex Tuesday morning.

The 59-year-old Go underwent a three-hour operation at the Ospital ng Maynila and again went under the knife to remove a bullet fragment embedded near his spinal cord at St. Luke's Medical Center, where he was transferred in the evening.

He was still confined at the intensive care unit, but was reported to be in stable condition as of last night. (*See related story on Page 1*).

Policemen have been sent to provide round-the-clock security to Go and his family, following explicit instructions from President Arroyo and PNP Police Chief Director General Hermogenes Ebdane.

A task force has also been created to go after Go's motorcyle-riding assailant and accomplice.

Still, these measures have done little to appease the Fil-Chinese community.

"Some of my friends are already thinking of hiring bodyguards, but what about for a small businessman like me," said the source. "We're hoping that the police would send more men in our area."

The assassination attempt on Go came a day after the condominium unit of Basketball Association of the Philippines secretary general Graham Lim was ransacked by an intruder.

"We hope that these incidents are not related because both involved two Fil-Chinese sports leaders," said the source. "We're monitoring these developments closely."

P70,000 per athlete to Vietnam SEAG

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DAYRIT

WITH the P10 million promised by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, the Philippines can now afford to send close to 500 athletes and 250 officials to the Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam this December.

The Philippine Olympic Committee yesterday pegged the cost of sending a delegation member to Vietnam at P70,000 and with the total budget now at P50 million, the country seems to have enough funds to field a huge contingent.

The Philippine Sports Commission has earlier announced a budget of P40 million for the actual participation in the biennial sportsfest set Dec. 5-13 in the cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh.

According to POC president Celso Dayrit, the plane fare from Manila to Hanoi and the connecting flight to Ho Chi Minh City would cost about $400 then add another $400 for hotel accommodation, uniform and equipment, and $300 for allowance.

"That would be $1,100 and at P53.5 to the dollar that is almost P60,000. Give another P10,000 and that's about P70,000 per delegate," Dayrit said. "If you are going to send 500 people in Vietnam at P70,000 per person, that would be P35 million."

The number of coaches and officials is normally one half of the total roster of athletes.

Following President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's instruction, the PSC had announced unconditional funding support for all athletes chosen by the POC, although PSC chair Eric Buhain emphasized not all the officials picked would be funded.

The PSC has already approved 361 athletes and 100 more are expected to make it before the deadline of submission of entries this September.

POC vice president Steve Hontiveros expressed satisfaction over the response of PSC officials towards the list of athletes the POC's task force has prepared during a meeting yesterday.

Although Buhain had already left when Dayrit arrived, Hontiveros said he's hoping that the preparation for the SEAG will now go on smoothly.

Hontiveros said the submission of the final list of athletes by sport is on Nov. 5.

WHAT'S INSIDE

▪ It's Williamses against Belgians /A18

▪ Paragua resumes chess bid in Europe /A18

▪ Beckham signs up with Real Madrid /A19

Letran scores; JRC up

GAMES TOMORROW
(*Rizal Coliseum*)
11:30 a.m.—UPHR vs San Sebastian (jrs/srs)
4:00 p.m.—PCU vs CSB (srs/jrs)

By June Navarro

LETRAN minimized its turnovers while forcing San Beda College to commit costly mistakes down the stretch to hack out a pulsating 69-63 win yesterday in the 79th NCAA basketball tournament at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

The Knights, who turned the ball over

LETRAN/A18

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

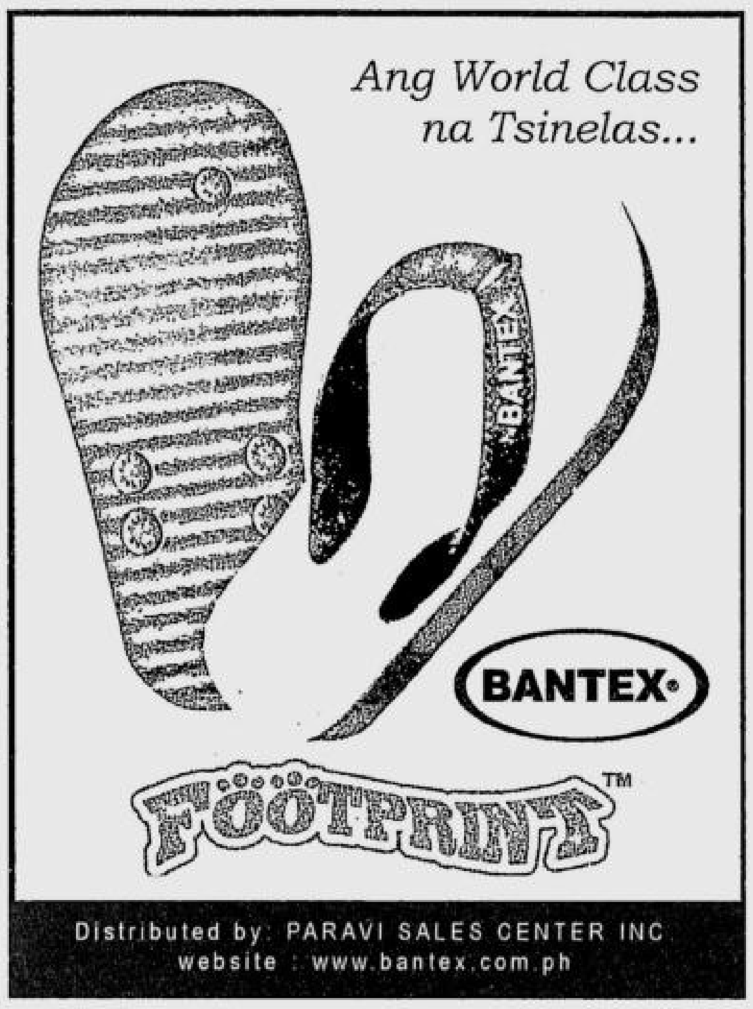
TENNIS: Wimbledon; Day 9 Highlights; 8 a.m. (r * 5:30 p.m.), Men's Singles Quarter Finals; 10:30 a.m. (r); Ladies Singles Semi Finals; 7 p.m.; Star Sports * Only the toughest will survive as the field is narrowed down to the eight for the men and four for the ladies.

GOLF: Fedex St. Jude Classic; 9 a.m.; Star Sports * Check out the highlights of this recently concluded PGA tournament.

Inside the PGA Tour: 3:30 p.m.; Star Sports * Learn more about the latest news and information in the PGA.

US Women's Golf Championship, First Round; tomorrow at 4 a.m.; ESPN * Jennifer Rosales begins her quest to win the big one as she competes with the finest women's golfers.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.



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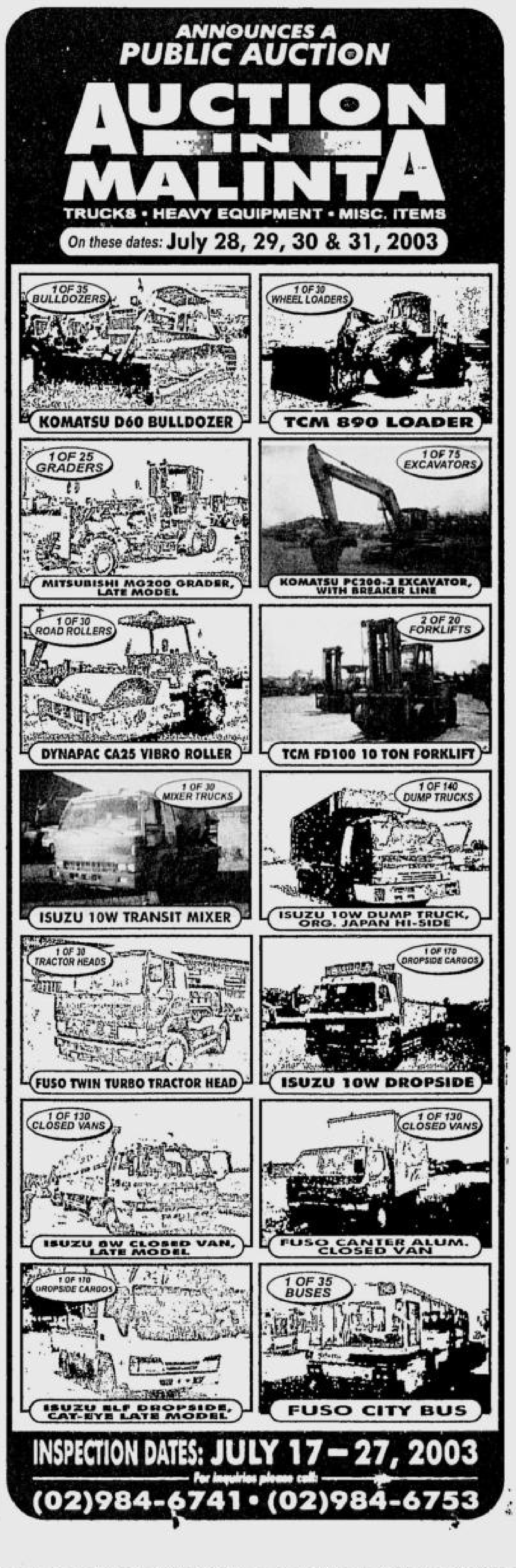

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WIMBLEDON SEMIS

Williams sisters against Belgians

WIMBLEDON, England—Serena Williams smacked one last volley to complete a quarterfinal comeback at Wimbledon, then let out a shriek and raised her arms. She still gets a kick out of beating Jennifer Capriati.

Williams overcame an erratic start Tuesday to defeat Capriati for the eighth consecutive time, winning 2-6, 6-2, 6-3.

The defending champion will next face Justine Henin-Hardenne, an upset winner in their French Open semifinal four weeks ago.

"I have no nerves, I've been in this position so many times," Williams said.

Henin-Hardenne, seeded third, beat No. 33 Svetlana Kuznetsova 6-2, 6-2.

Williams joined her older sister in the semifinals. Venus Williams, the Wimbledon champion in 2000 and 2001, won the final five games and the last 11 points to beat No. 5 Lindsay Davenport 6-2, 2-6, 6-1.

Davenport, the 1999 champion, said the match may have been her last at Wimbledon. Newly married and hampered by injuries in recent years, Davenport said she plans to play the US Open but may be nearing retirement.

"There are absolutely no plans made," said Davenport, 27. "It's not saying that it's over. It's just saying that I'm not sure."

Venus Williams, like her sister, will play a Belgian in the semifinals–No. 2 Kim Clijsters, who was stung by a bee but rallied past No. 27 Silvia Farina Elia 5-7, 6-0, 6-1.

At one point midway through her match, Serena Williams had committed 20 unforced errors to four for Capriati. But the top-seeded Williams became more patient, winning one rally that lasted 28 strokes, and swept seven consecutive games to take the lead for good.

"She had to play her best tennis there to raise her game completely to beat me," Capriati said. "I don't think I gave her the match. She had to step it up."

There were numerous long rallies, and Williams described them as "fantastic."

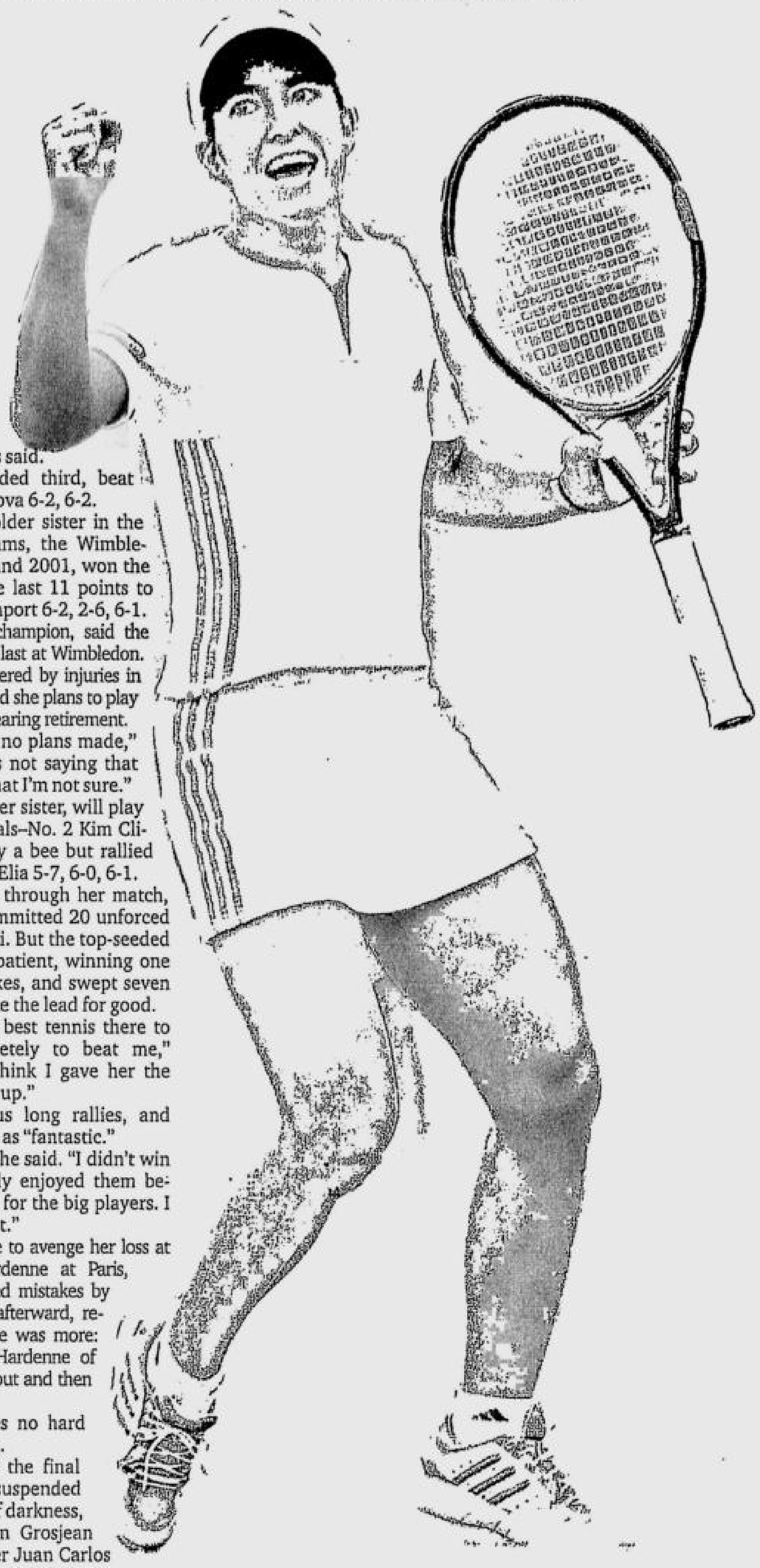
"I enjoyed them all," she said. "I didn't win them all, but I definitely enjoyed them because it gets me focused for the big players. I know what I'm up against."

She'll now get a chance to avenge her loss at the hands of Henin-Hardenne at Paris, where French fans cheered mistakes by Williams and jeered her afterward, reducing her to tears. There was more: Williams accused Henin-Hardenne of cheating by calling a timeout and then not acknowledging it.

Henin-Hardenne takes no hard feelings into the rematch.

In the completion of the final fourth-round match, suspended Monday night because of darkness, No. 13-seeded Sebastien Grosjean beat French Open winner Juan Carlos Ferrero 6-2, 4-6, 7-6 (2), 7-6 (3).

Grosjean, whose win left the men's quarterfinals with no former Grand Slam champion, will play No. 10 Tim Henman on Wednesday. *AP*



HENIN-HARDENNE pumps her fist after ousting Kuznetsova, 6-2, 6-2. Henin-Hardenne will next face defending women's champion Serena Williams in the semifinals. AFP

Jenny seeks another big Open paycheck

By Jong Arcano

THE PAYCHECK is always big even for the last placer in the prestigious US Women's Open and it's for this reason the pros in the 156-player field including Jenny Rosales admit there is no reason for bad play.

In fact, the US Open paychecks make up a large part of Jenny's winnings in the last three years.

Had she not won $55,354 for sharing 12th place back in her 2000 debut, Rosales could have been back in the qualifying school the next year since it was more than half of the $109,075 she earned that season.

And to date, the $78,015 Rosales brought home for a solo seventh place finish last year in Hutchinson, Kansas remains her biggest paycheck so far–even bigger than what she actually received for her career-best runner-up finish in the Giant Eagle Classic last month.

"There is just a lot of money to be won and it's really the tournament where we all want to play well," Rosales told the INQUIRER on Tuesday (Wednesday Manila time) of the Open the 58th edition of which blasts off tomorrow (Friday Manila time) in Portland, Oregon.

The Open offers a total purse of $3.1 million with $560,000 going to the winner.

Rosales, 24, kicked off her preparations with a routine warmup at the Witch Hollow course at Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club, one of America's top-rated golf courses, with American Kellee Booth while Bong Lopez made some swing checks.

ROSALES: A good swing is all that matters.

After being forewarned that Pumpkin Ridge may become one of the toughest US Open sites, Rosales said a good swing is all that matters.

"I actually believe that Pumpkin Ridge is one of the most beautiful I've played. We LPGA players have been exposed to all kinds of challenges and difficulties that in the end we know that playing well is the bottomline."

Rosales, whose LPGA stint is sponsored in part by the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. and the American Eye Center, is paired with Leta Lindley of the US and Shani Waugh at 8:21 a.m. on the first tee for the opening round.

Rosales is enjoying her biggest season so far. She has total earnings of $221,774 in 13 events including four top 10 finishes. She is now 23rd in the money list after going as high as 19th after the Giant Eagle.

Thursday and Friday action will be broadcast live on ESPN, while NBC will provide live coverage on Saturday and Sunday.

They had 'taho' for breakfast

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

LOVE your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your heavenly Father, for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good, and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.

Beautiful isn't it?

But the above is not mine. Yes, you guessed it right, that's from the Good Book.

Said in another way, the above tells us to be always forgiving, the reason being that the good and the bad, they're both children of the heavenly Father. If we believe in God, then we must entrust everything to Him. And because He can forgive, more so with us because we are but His children–if we can honestly say that to ourselves.

And so, can Go Teng Kok forgive his would-be assassin, and the mastermind(s), too?

To those not in the know, Go Teng Kok, president of the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association, was shot three times just the other day. GTK was behind the wheel of a Mitsubishi Adventure when fired upon by a lone gunman.

The early morning attack came while GTK was waiting for the gate of the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex leading to the PATAFA office along Adriatico St. to be opened by a lady security guard.

As was his Monday to Saturday routine, GTK left his Quezon City home at about 7 a.m. and arrived at the RMSC minutes past 8 a.m.

But this particular Tuesday morning, he would not make it even to the parking lot.

A man in white T-shirt pumped two bullets into his face, piercing GTK's cheeks. One bullet exited through the right cheek, another lodged in the skull, missing the brain by a hair. A third bullet missed.

After the attacker was done, he hopped behind a motorcycle, its engine purring. The driver, wearing a helmet and a black jacket, gunned the bike towards Pablo Ocampo (Vito Cruz), losing themselves into heavy traffic. Just minutes before the attack, as they waited in ambush, the pair bought 'taho' for breakfast from a passing vendor.

"I swear I can identify them if I saw them again," said a witness to the crime.

The would-be assassins left GTK for dead.

Or so they thought.

For, surprisingly, if not miraculously, GTK, after he was shot at, was still able to open the door of his vehicle. His face a gory mask of blood, he cried for help.

The lady guard, too stunned at the sudden turn of events to respond, seemed to have feet weighed down by rocks. Three judokas, preparing for their usual morning training, happened to be passing by. They flung their duffel bags at the guard for safekeeping, and then carried GTK to a taxicab for the short trip to the Ospital ng Maynila.

All the time this was happening, GTK was awake, firing away instructions to the judokas. Luckily, the bullets missed his tongue. He even handed them his wallet and a diamond-studded Rolex wrist watch for safekeeping.

Soon, the slay try spread like wild fire.

Soon, the airwaves were swamped with both words of sympathy (sports officials, even his fiercest enemies, started extolling GTK's virtues) and negative opinion (drug angles linking GTK were suddenly being unearthed in wild abandon).

Soon, government functionaries–from President Macapagal-Arroyo to Manila Mayor Lito Atienza–were instructing lawmen to go after GTK's would-be assassins. After all, two mayors had been assassinated the past two weeks alone. This one was another black eye to the peace-and-order pitch GMA had been harping about the past few months, not to mention heavy government casualties inflicted by NPA rebels in the South. After all, isn't sports supposed to be neutral territory?

As Cito Dayrit, the Olympic boss who has not been in good terms with GTK for quite a while now, said: "This is totally unacceptable, coming at a time when he is preparing to stage the Asian Championship."

Cito Dayrit was among the first sports officials to rush to the hospital. Said he: "The sporting community is saddened by this tragic event. This is a sad day for Philippine sports."

Truly, it is.

A man may have his faults like GTK, considered as one of the most–if not the most–controversial sports leader in the land.

But who hasn't?

GTK is one guy who has a penchant to open his mouth each time he feels there's something wrong with Philippine sports, or senses something fishy. For this, he gets himself into trouble more often than not.

In this latest saga of GTK's drama-laden life, there was hardly a ripple from him as to stir the so-called hornet's nest prior to the slay attempt. Nobody knows as yet of a bomb about to be detonated by the man known for his unorthodox, if not irreverent, style of sports governance.

The gunman missed his tongue, yes, but will GTK, the Olympic president who never was and a staunch ally of PSC Eric Buhain, be silenced from hereon? I mean, will he start throwing caution to the wind before he drops another of his patented attacks on sports' evildoers once he gets fully recovered?

Hard to tell.

But suffice it to say that GTK, who was manager of the team coached by Sen. Robert Jaworski that won the basketball silver in the 1990 Beijing Asian Games, will live. Hopefully, he will tell us the mystery behind his great escape?

Hard to tell again, but this much I can say: If he will speak of forgiveness, I will not be surprised. GTK, 59, is a devotee of the Miraculous Virgin Mary of Manaoag, Pangasinan.

I guess, he lived for a mission waiting to be done.

Letran scores...

From page A17

34 times during their 66-58 setback against the Mapua Cardinals last Sunday, had only 18 errors this time.

"We still have to improve on our turnovers. The less we make them, the stronger the possibility of our winning the game," said Letran coach Louie Alas, who steered the Knights to the 1999 NCAA crown.

Jose Rizal battled back from 15 points down to beat Mapua, 91-77, in the other seniors game.

The Heavy Bombers bounced back from an opening-day setback to the defending champions San Sebastian Stags and tied the Cardinals at 1-1.

Torrid field-goal shooting also spelled the difference for the Knights, who fired five three-pointers in the stretch that doomed the Red Lions.

Rookie Mark Fedelicio drilled in two treys while Dale Santos, Aaron Aban and Ronjay Enrile buried a triple each as the Knights overhauled a 43-51 deficit.

Enrile's triple with barely four minutes left gave the Knights the lead for good, 62-57.

"We shot the ball pretty well but I guess it's not enough. I told them that we should throw the ball into the hoop as many times as we could. In that way, there's a big probability that the shots might go in," said Alas.

Enrile led the Knights with 20 points while Aban contributed 12, the output of SBC top scorer Jun Cordero.

The Red Lions lost heart in the face of the Knights' explosive performance from the outside and lapsed into a series of miscues that erased their gallant effort in the third quarter.

San Beda coach Jonathan Reyes also found no answer to the choking trapping defense of the Knights.

Scores:

LETRAN 69—Enrile 20, Aban 12, Fedelicio 8, Santos 7, Rodriguez 7, Pinera 7, Bautista 5, Reyes 2, Aldave 1, Anabo 0, Ebajay 0.

SAN BEDA 63—Cordero 12, Padilla 10, Casino 10, Hudencial 10, Paterno 10, Apepe 4, Angeles 3, Antonio 2, Bombeo 2, Baldivia 0, Ong 0.

Quarters: 13-23, 34-34, 48-51, 69-63.

JRU 91—Domangcas 17, Te 14, Lindaya 13, Santos 11, Berboran 11, Fajardo 11, Jorge 7, Atumaga 3, Coyukang 2, Series 2, Paulo 0.

MIT 77—Malig 20, Cruz 16, Ce 11, Dula 9, Guevarra 7, Gonzales 5, Beranga 2, Martix 2, Del Rosario 2, Salud 0, Migrase 0.

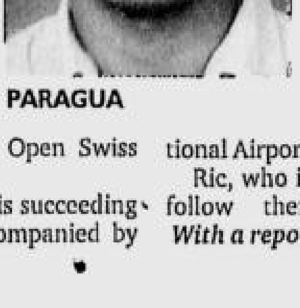
Quarters: 19-20, 37-39, 64-47, 91-77.

Paragua leaves for Paris

By Roy Luarca

HIS father won't be by his side when Mark Callano Paragua leaves for Paris, France today in a bid to become a full-fledged grandmaster.

"I'll do my best to finally complete my GM title," said Paragua, who needs two more grandmaster results to become the country's youngest GM at 19. "Please pray for me."



PARAGUA

Paragua copped his first grandmaster result in the 2001 Mondariz, Spain International Open Swiss event.

That time and almost all of his succeeding tournaments, Mark was accompanied by his engineer father, Ric.

Paragua missed his second GM result in the recent Asian Zonal 3.2a chess championships in Ho Chi Minh City, settling for second place to compatriot and roommate Ronald Dableo. They both qualified for the 2004 World Chess Championships.

According to Mark's mother, Liza, her son will go to Europe by himself and will meet his coach and newly installed international master Joseph Sanchez at the Paris International Airport.

Ric, who is still scrounging for funds, will follow them to Europe next week. *With a report from NM Marlon Bernardino*

Souquet rips Kiamco; Reyes routs Chamat

By Dennis U. Eroa

KIAMCO: Missed easy shots.

EUROPEAN champion Ralf Souquet of Germany downed Filipino bet Warren Kiamco, 7-4, yesterday in an overpowering start in the On Cue 1st RP-Europe 9-ball billiards tournament at the Loop Entertainment Center inside the Don Eugenio Lopez building in Quezon City.

Nicknamed the "Kaiser," Souquet exploited Kiamco's erratic game to post the easy win in this five-day tournament featuring some of the world's best cue artists.

But Efren "Bata" Reyes somehow avenged Kiamco's loss with a 7-2 rout of Sweden's Marcus Chamat.

Looking nervous, Kiamco, the 1999 Asian 9-ball titleholder, hastened his downfall by missing easy shots which could have given him the edge over the cool and calculating Souquet, a native of Eschweiler, Germany.

The crowd composed mostly of high-ranking ABS-CBN officials and other key personalities roared in disbelief as Kiamco missed the nine ball which could have given him an early 3-1 advantage.

Despite regaling the crowd with crafty safety shots, Kiamco, whose biggest win came in the 2001 Tokyo International 9-ball Championship, seemed unable to keep his focus. In contrast, Souquet repeatedly scored on powerful breaks to kick off the torrid European assault.

Also seeing action later in the night were Antonio Lining and Django Bustamante who will tackle Mika Immonen and Dutchman Niels Feijen, respectively in this event regarded as a warm-up for the coming World 9-ball championship in Cardiff, Wales.

"It's not yet over. I committed mistakes but those are part of the game," said Kiamco, who will meet Immonen today.

Playing like a cold-blooded killer, Souquet roared to a 6-3 lead and not even Kiamco's victory in the 10th game could change the complexion of the contest.

The tournament organized by Puyat Sports and supported by ABS-CBN offers the champion $15,000, with the second placer getting $10,000. The third and fourth placers get $5,000 and $3,000, respectively.

A total of 16 matches will be played in the eliminations which are a race to 7 affair and using the alternate break format. The top two players from both groups (RP, Europe) will advance to the crossover semifinals which will use the race to 11 alternate break format.

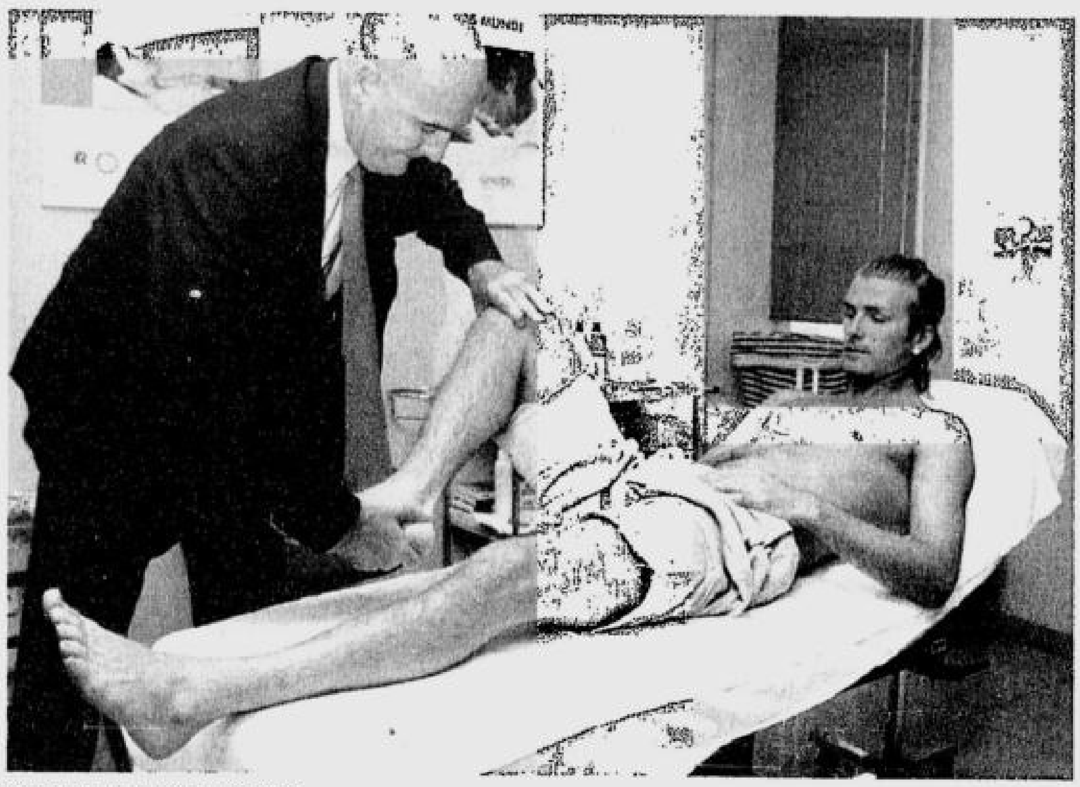
Winners of the semifinal round advance to the race to 13 alternate break format. As an innovation, the event is using the shot clock rule which gives players 45 seconds to execute a shot. If a player goes over the allotted time, he will be fined $50.

Nigerian stuns Greene in 100

LAUSANNE, Switzerland—Deji Aliu of Nigeria stole the thunder from US World and Olympic champion Maurice Greene with victory in the men's 100 meters as a string of athletes set world bests at Tuesday's Athletissima meeting.

The 27-year-old Aliu, who already had two major victories under his belt this season, completed the race on the wet Pontaise track in 10.04 seconds, ahead of Bernard Williams of the United States who had a time of 10.10. Greene was third in 10.11.

The meeting had originally been touted as a grudge match between Greene and the current world record holder Tim Montgomery. *AP*



BECKHAM CHECKUP

British soccer superstar David Beckham (right) is examined by Real Madrid doctor Alfonso del Corral during a checkup in Madrid. Beckham signed a four-year contract with Real Madrid on Tuesday to complete his move from Manchester United and become the latest jewel in the Spanish club's crown. The transfer will be worth up to 35 million euros ($40.40 million) to Manchester United. The 28-year-old Beckham, one of the world's best-known and most marketable footballers, will be presented as a Real Madrid player on Wednesday.

Pro boxing tilt on tonight

BOXING takes center stage when the Philippine Pro-Boxing League (PPBL) kicks off tonight with a main event pitting two of the country's most promising flyweight contenders.

Cat-quick Danilo Peña, a seasoned 19-year-old with a seven-win, one-loss record, takes on hard-hitting Jun Eraham, who has traveled all the way from Saranggani Province in a 10-round bout at the Mandaluyong Gym.

Peña will represent the Mandaluyong Boxing Gym and can count on the backing of a partisan hometown crowd, but Eraham, a knockout artist with 12 KOs in his 16 victories, is expected to give him a tough fight.

Solar Sports will telecast the NBA Playoffs-type slugfest every Thursday from 8-9 on IBC-13.

The winner of this bout advances to the PPBL quarterfinals and is a step closer to being crowned the 1st PPBL flyweight champion. With it goes a P50,000 cash purse from the total tournament pot of over P500,000.

Sixteen of the finest flyweights are competing in the four-month-long PPBL tournament where one defeat means outright elimination.

The PPBL is a joint project of I-Sports Action Television and Solar Sports. Nazario-Mondejar Promotions, the home stable of world champion Manny Pacquiao, has brought together the cream of the country's top 12 boxing stables for this event.

SPORTSWATCH

James close to signing with Cavs

CLEVELAND—LeBron James, selected No. 1 overall pick in the NBA draft last week by the Cleveland Cavaliers, may sign his rookie contract with the club as soon as Wednesday, his agent said. Aaron Goodwin said late Tuesday that negotiations with Cavaliers general manager Jim Paxson have progressed and he was coming to Cleveland to finalize a deal. If the Cavaliers pay James the maximum over the length of the deal, he'll make $4.02 million (2003-04), $4.32 million ('04-05) and $4.62 million ('05-'06) over the next three seasons. Cleveland would hold an option for the fourth season that could pay James another $5.8 million. *AP*

Marlins rip Braves, set runs record

MIAMI—Rookie Miguel Cabrera homered twice as the Florida Marlins set a team record for runs, beating the Atlanta Braves 20-1 Tuesday in a game delayed after a photographer was hit in the head by a flying bat. The game was held up for 18 minutes in the seventh inning after a bat slipped from the hands of Atlanta's Darren Bragg and struck the unidentified photographer, causing significant bleeding. The man, working beyond the first-base dugout, sustained lacerations to the face but never lost consciousness, the Marlins said. He was airlifted to a hospital and there was no immediate word on his condition. *AP*

4x4 challenge in Pasig Saturday

MORE than 100 off-road driving enthusiasts will see action in the Shell Helix 4x4 Challenge this Saturday at the Payanig sa Pasig carnival grounds in Pasig City. Organized by the Suzuki Club of the Philippines and sponsored by Shell Helix diesel oil, the event promises to be the biggest 4x4 competition in the country this year. Larry Alberto, president of Suzuki Club, said AUV manufacturers like Isuzu, Mitsubishi and Toyota will be fielding their entries in the AUV race. Pasig Vice Mayor Lorna Angeles-Bernardo is the event's guest of honor. Interested parties call 634-3861 or 0918-909-0960.

'Hattah-Hattah' 3rd round elims on

THE "HATTAH-HATTAH 5-Cock Derby" enters its third round eliminations at 5 p.m. today at the Roligon Mega Cockpit. Host Roly Ligon said that a total of 80 new entries are competing. Today's sponsors are Casino Filipino Parañaque, Thunderbird Enertone and Ninja Gamefowl Feeds. Out of 183 participants who saw action last Saturday and Tuesday, 37 bets posted scores of two victories each. All qualifiers will advance to the 3-cock finals on Saturday, July 5. Total guaranteed prize is P2.2 million. Interested parties may call 833-2275 and 833-1638.

Pasay 4-cock meet unfolds Friday

PASAY City Cockpit's much-awaited 4-cock derby will start at 7 p.m. on Friday (July 4). Sponsors are Sagupaan Mite Free, Sagupaan B-50 Forten and Sagupaan Hammer. Host is businessman Mon Torres of Pasay, who put up a cash prize of P300,000. Entry fee is P10,000, while submission of weights is from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. tomorrow. Meanwhile, the "PCC Anniversary 5-Cock Derby" slated July 15, 17 and 19 will start at 2 p.m. because of the big number of fights. Pit managers Oscar Gonzales, Eric dela Rosa and Butchoy Olano expect about 200 entries to compete. For reservation of cockhouse, please contact 816-6750, 843-1890 and 843-1746.

Friendship golf tilt at Sta. Elena

THE SECOND Airlift Asia Inc. (AAI) Friendship Golf Tournament blasts off today at the Sta. Elena Golf Club in Laguna. To be participated in by corporate clients, industry partners and friends, the tournament will use the System 36 format. "This is a nice way for us to thank everyone who over the years has been part of the growth of the company," AAI president and CEO Rico Brizuela said. A major highlight of the event will be the send-off party AAI will give to the Philippine team that will be participating in the 2003 Callaway Junior World Golf Championship.

RACING TIPS

AT SLLP BY MR. 999

Race 1--1. Kokopelli/Secret Quest 2. Graceful Ann 3. Palachik
Race 2--1. Night Flight 2. Lady Victoria 3. Free Rein 4. Si Isidro Ko
Race 3--1. Virgin Atlantic 2. Capriole 3. All Class 4. Prince of Africa
Race 4--1. Jahard 2. May's Magic 3. Golden Tale 4. Maple My Love
Race 5--1. Calvin's Magic 2. Deputy Orfa 3. Hundredfold/Sovereign Queen
Race 6--1. San Diego Force 2. Earl Gray 3. Elusive Quality
Race 7--1. Holy King/Montpellier 2. Star Worth 3. Native Prince 4. Nitty Gritty
Race 8--1. E-Mail 2. Friendly Venture 3. Classic Royale
Race 9--1. Arrivederci 2. Bakasan 3. Dulce My Love 4. Real Material 5. Noble House

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Siblings in harmony
Noel is new ... champ
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BOHOL
Is Sato dead? Police finally confirm kidnap

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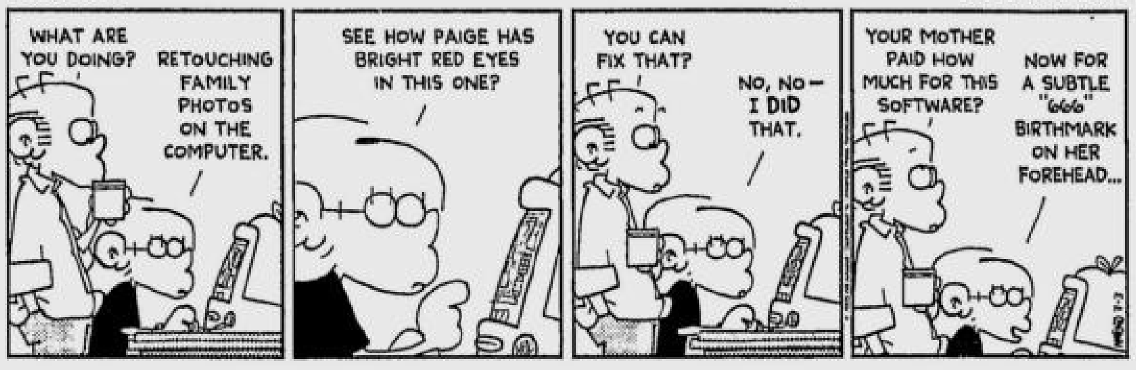
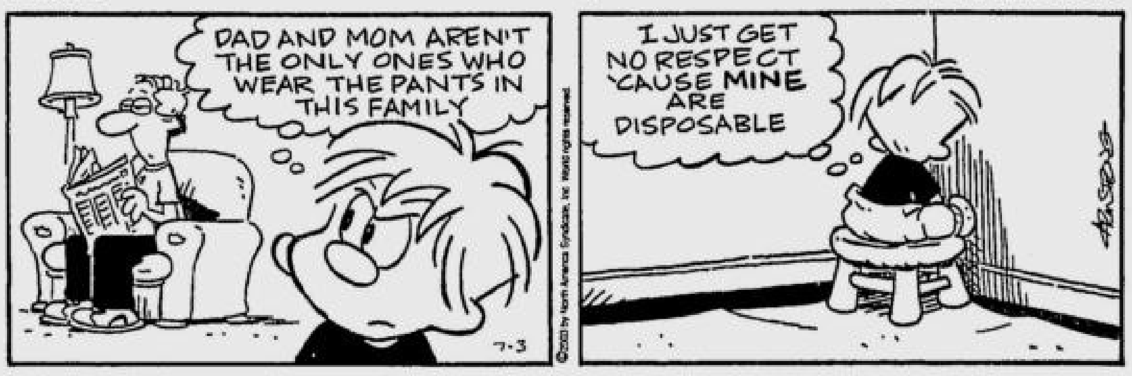
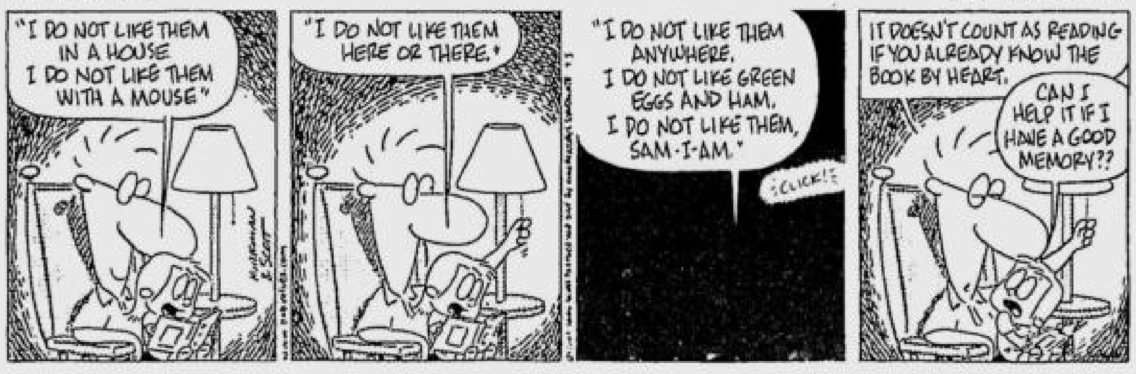
FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND


WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
RETOUCHING FAMILY PHOTOS ON THE COMPUTER.
SEE HOW PAIGE HAS BRIGHT RED EYES IN THIS ONE?
YOU CAN FIX THAT?
NO, NO — I DID THAT.
YOUR MOTHER PAID HOW MUCH FOR THIS SOFTWARE?
NOW FOR A SUBTLE "666" BIRTHMARK ON HER FOREHEAD...

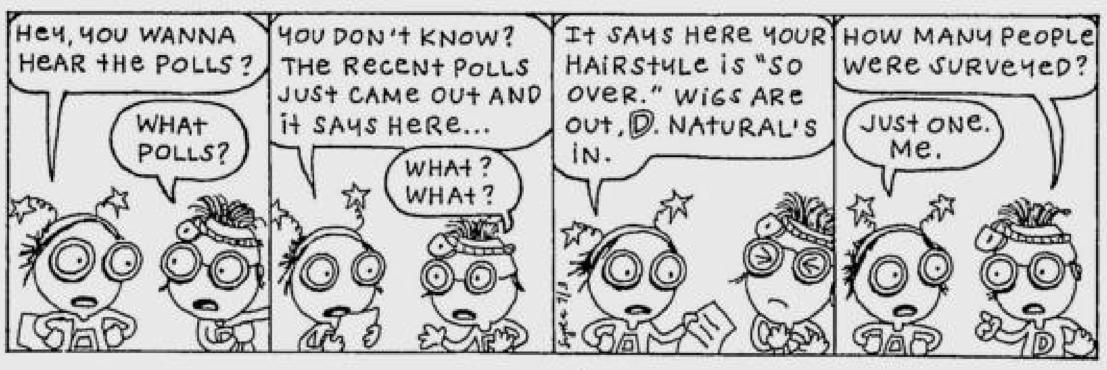
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


DAD AND MOM AREN'T THE ONLY ONES WHO WEAR THE PANTS IN THIS FAMILY
I JUST GET NO RESPECT 'CAUSE MINE ARE DISPOSABLE
7-3

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


"I DO NOT LIKE THEM IN A HOUSE I DO NOT LIKE THEM WITH A MOUSE"
"I DO NOT LIKE THEM HERE OR THERE."
"I DO NOT LIKE THEM ANYWHERE. I DO NOT LIKE GREEN EGGS AND HAM. I DO NOT LIKE THEM, SAM-I-AM."
¡CLICK!¡
IT DOESN'T COUNT AS READING IF YOU ALREADY KNOW THE BOOK BY HEART.
CAN I HELP IT IF I HAVE A GOOD MEMORY??

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, you WANNA HEAR the POLLS?
WHAT POLLS?
you DON'T KNOW? The RECENT POLLS JUST CAME OUT AND it SAYS HERE...
WHAT? WHAT?
It SAYS HERE YOUR HAIRSTYLE is "SO OVER." WIGS ARE OUT, D. NATURAL'S IN.
HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE SURVEYED?
JUST ONE. Me.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are a shrewd observer of the human condition and will always fight for justice. You have enormous self-discipline whenever you choose to apply it. You are truthful, honest and sensitive. Few would guess how philosophical you are. You can look forward to a lovely, socially active year that highlights all partnerships.
Birthdate of: Tom Cruise, actor; Kurtwood Smith, actor; Yeardley Smith, actress/Lisa Simpson's voice.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): At this point in your life, it's time to give thought to your living situation. Do you stay where you are, or do you move? Or do you improve what you have?

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Because it is likely you will have a residential or job change in the next two years, you are giving this a lot of thought now. But you're not rash or hasty.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You want to have greater control over your life through your possessions. You wonder how much your possessions define who you are. You aren't what you own.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're entering a new situation in your life. In fact, you are on the brink of a 30-year cycle of growth and development.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): There is no question that in the next two years, you will dismantle much of what you worked for since the early 1990s. Accept this and get on with it.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): At this stage in your life, you can achieve strong success. In fact, when Jupiter moves into Virgo (in August), you have a year of extremely good luck.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): It's time to either enjoy your success or admit you're barking up the wrong tree. If the latter is the case, since you're not a dog, move on. (Woof.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You are getting closer to your career peak in life, which occurs a few years from now. Increased education or training through travel can help you this year.

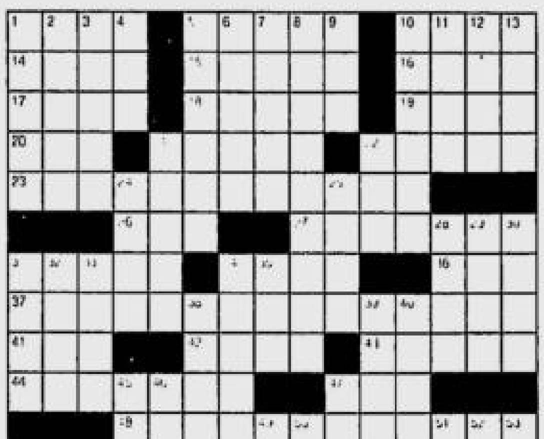
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your partner might change jobs or undergo a career shift. This means you have to rely on yourself as your primary resource. Your career gets a boost this year.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): As you become empowered now (you are making your debut into the world), you might threaten existing relationships. That's why this is a tough time for partnerships. Have patience.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is definitely the time for you to prepare for hard work. The next two years are a test for you to show others what you can really do.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Increased responsibilities with children are likely now and later this year. Privately, you are beginning to wonder what you want to be when you grow up.

DAILY CROSSWORD

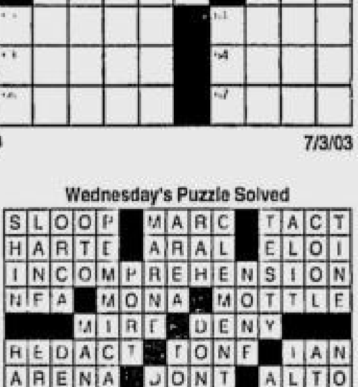


By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL
7/3/03

ACROSS
1 Karma
5 Book of maps
10 Metal waste
14 Mineral supplement
15 Nosy Parker
16 Boxcar hopper
17 Fish catchers
18 Zoroastrian in India
19 Hold sway
20 Genetic code letters
21 Send in payment
22 Down
23 $10,000 honoree
26 Flop
27 Follower of Jeremiah
31 Not spoken
34 Car
36 Intl. broadcasters
37 $1,000 honoree
41 Hostelry
42 On the __ (estranged)
43 Close to cracking
44 Fattening place
47 Play on words
48 $5,000 honoree
54 Off-the-cuff remark
57 Brother's daughter
58 Also
59 City on the Rhone
60 Ball beauty
61 Rest fitfully
62 Half-goat man
63 Organic compound
64 First name in daredevils
65 Against
66 Zigzag turns
67 Highland loch

DOWN
1 Discovers
2 Hippodrome
3 Sum
4 USNA grad
5 Add on
6 Tread down
7 Like odes
8 People with artistic sensibilities
9 __ Lanka
10 Frantic cry
11 Boisterous
12 Ready and willing partner
13 Active person
21 Postman's course
22 Compass pt.
24 DCCLII x II
25 Black Sea arm
28 Karamazov brother
29 Long periods of time
30 Put on cargo
31 Wage-slave's refrain
32 British composer
33 Dunce cap shape
34 Sharpness
35 Most remote, briefly
38 Enough space
39 Practice piece
40 Filmmaker Riefenstahl
45 Muslim spirit
46 Sci. workplace
47 Indiana hoopsters
49 River deposits
50 Dust-up
51 Kitchen device
52 Seeps
53 Yuletide songs
54 __-Romeo
55 Cannon of film
56 Oaf
60 Buzzing insect
61 Iniquitous location

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved



S	L	O	O	P	■	M	A	R	C	■	T	A	C	T
H	A	R	T	E	■	A	R	A	L	■	E	L	O	I
I	N	C	O	M	P	R	E	H	E	N	S	I	O	N
N	F	A	■	M	O	N	A	■	M	O	T	T	L	E
■	■	■	M	I	R	E	■	D	E	N	Y	■	■	■
R	E	D	A	C	T	■	T	O	N	E	■	I	A	N
A	R	E	N	A	■	J	O	N	T	■	A	L	T	O
I	N	C	O	N	S	E	Q	U	E	N	T	I	A	L
L	I	A	R	■	A	B	U	T	■	O	H	A	R	A
S	F	I	■	C	L	U	E	■	L	M	O	D	I	N
■	■	■	F	R	E	T	■	I	R	I	S	■	■	■
T	I	A	R	A	S	■	G	R	I	N	■	T	I	N
I	N	C	O	M	M	U	N	I	C	A	T	I	V	E
E	D	A	M	■	A	S	A	P	■	T	A	K	E	N
R	O	D	E	■	N	A	T	E	■	E	L	I	S	E

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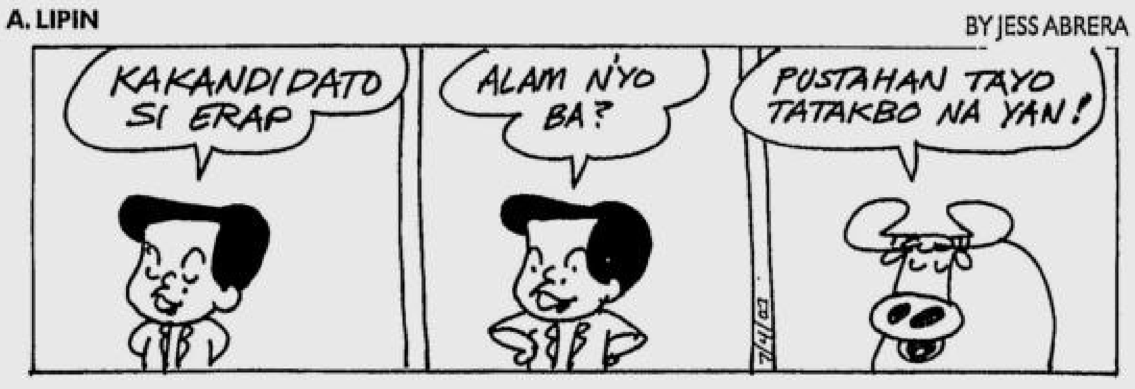
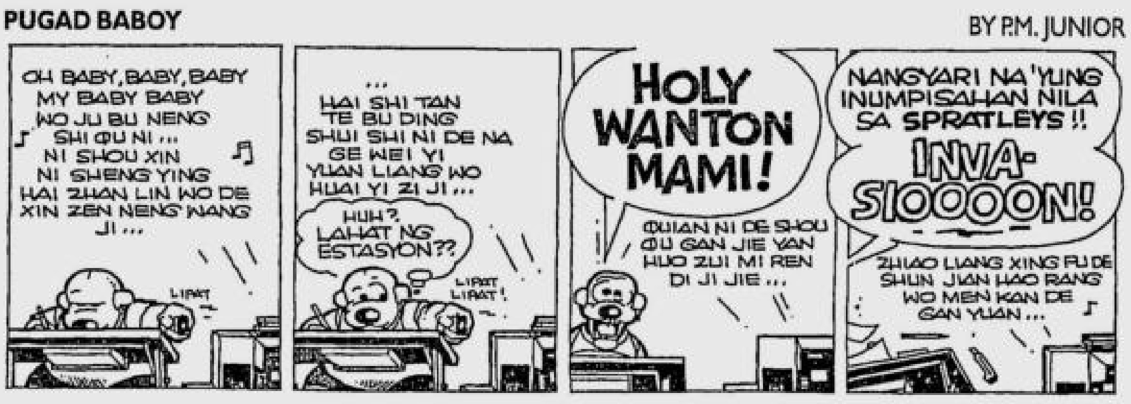
7/2/03

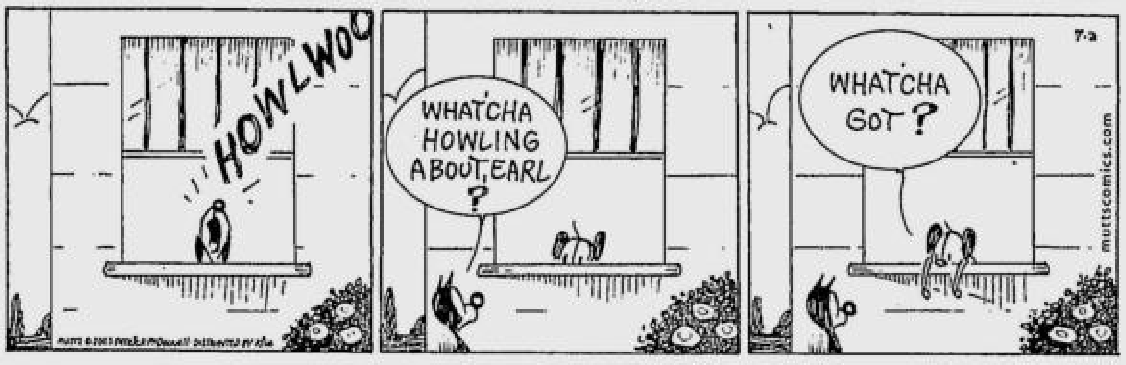
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


KAKANDIDATO SI ERAP
ALAM N'YO BA?
PUSTAHAN TAYO TATAKBO NA YAN!
7/4/03

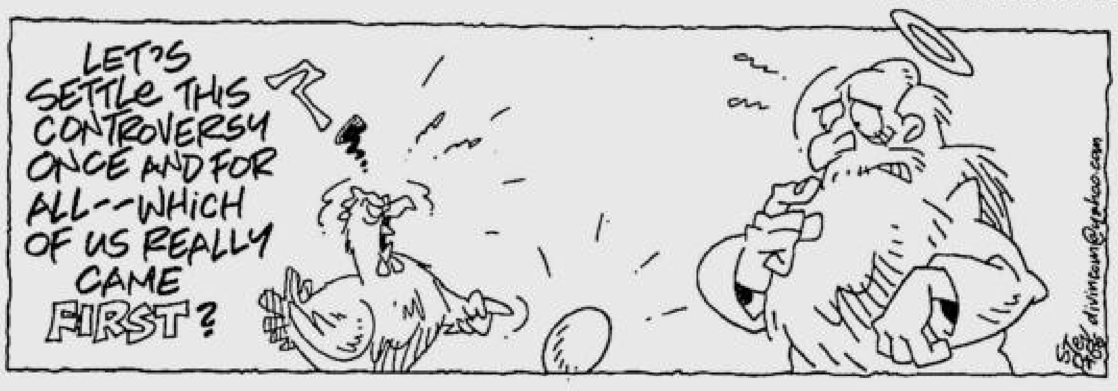
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


OH BABY, BABY, BABY MY BABY BABY WO JU BU NENG SHI QU NI ... NI SHOU XIN NI SHENG YING HAI ZHAN LIN WO DE XIN ZEN NENG WANG JI ...
LIPAT
... HAI SHI TAN TE BU DING SHUI SHI NI DE NA GE WEI YI YUAN LIANG WO HUAI YI ZI JI ...
HUH?, LAHAT NG ESTASYON??
LIPAT LIPAT!
HOLY WANTON MAMI!
QUIAN NI DE SHOU QU GAN JIE YAN HUO ZUI MI REN DI JI JIE ...
NANGYARI NA 'YUNG INUMPISAHAN NILA SA SPRATLEYS !!
INVA-SIOOOON!
ZHAO LIANG XING FU DE SHUN JIAN HAO RANG WO MEN KAN DE GAN YUAN ...

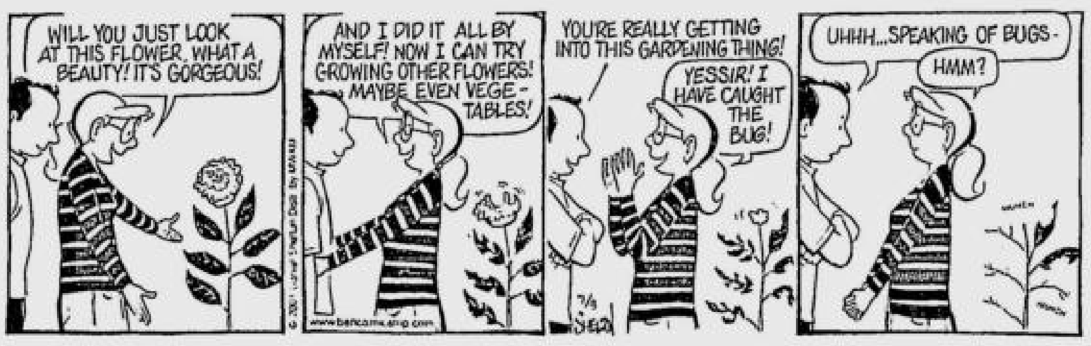
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HOWLWOO
WHAT'CHA HOWLING ABOUT, EARL ?
7-3
WHAT'CHA GOT ?
muttscomics.com

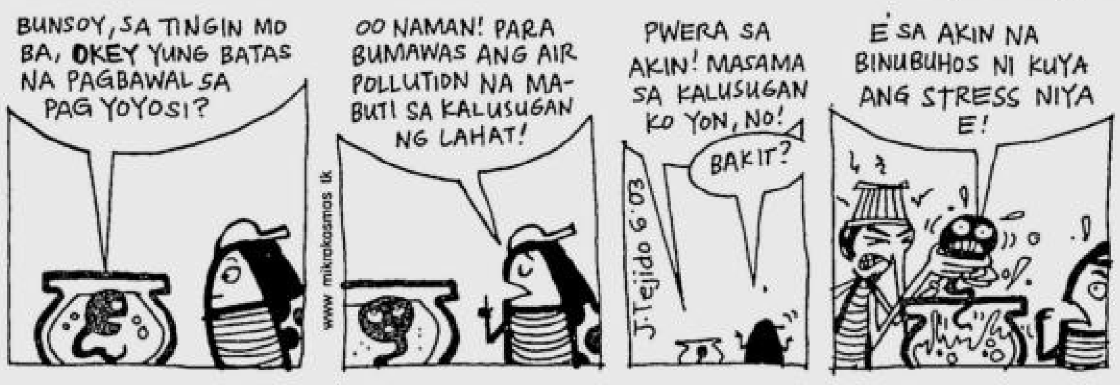
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


LET'S SETTLE THIS CONTROVERSY ONCE AND FOR ALL--WHICH OF US REALLY CAME FIRST?

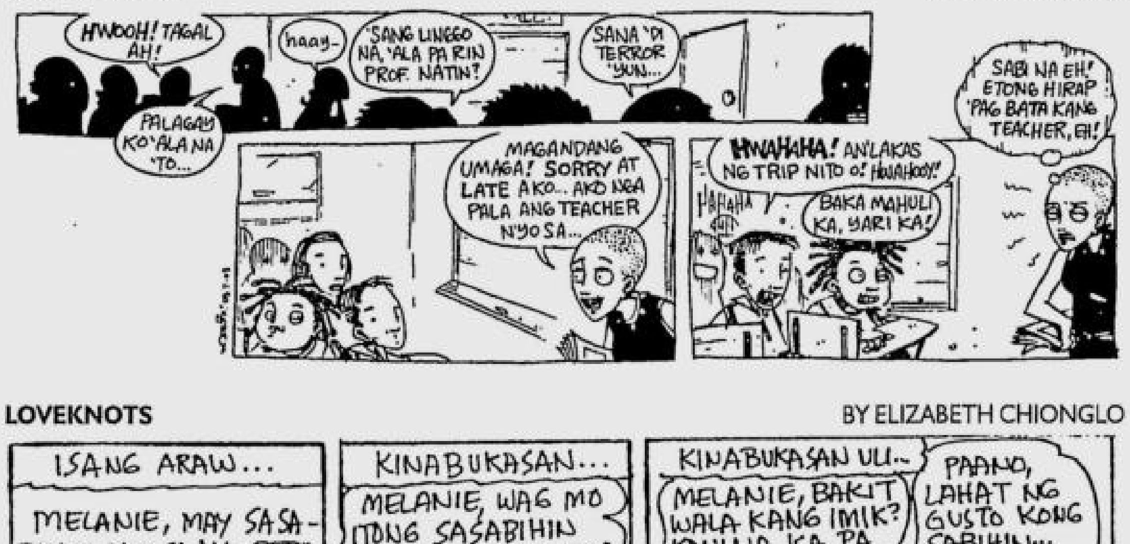
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


WILL YOU JUST LOOK AT THIS FLOWER. WHAT A BEAUTY! IT'S GORGEOUS!
AND I DID IT ALL BY MYSELF! NOW I CAN TRY GROWING OTHER FLOWERS! MAYBE EVEN VEGETABLES!
YOU'RE REALLY GETTING INTO THIS GARDENING THING!
YESSIR! I HAVE CAUGHT THE BUG!
UHHH...SPEAKING OF BUGS-
HMM?
www.bencomicstrip.com

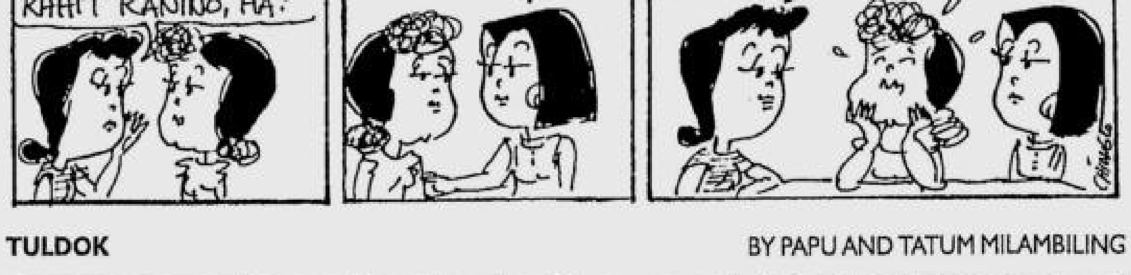
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BUNSOY, SA TINGIN MO BA, OKEY YUNG BATAS NA PAGBAWAL SA PAG YOYOSI?
OO NAMAN! PARA BUMAWAS ANG AIR POLLUTION NA MABUTI SA KALUSUGAN NG LAHAT!
www mikrokosmos tk
PWERA SA AKIN! MASAMA SA KALUSUGAN KO YON, NO!
BAKIT?
J. Tejido 6'03
E SA AKIN NA BINUBUHOS NI KUYA ANG STRESS NIYA E!

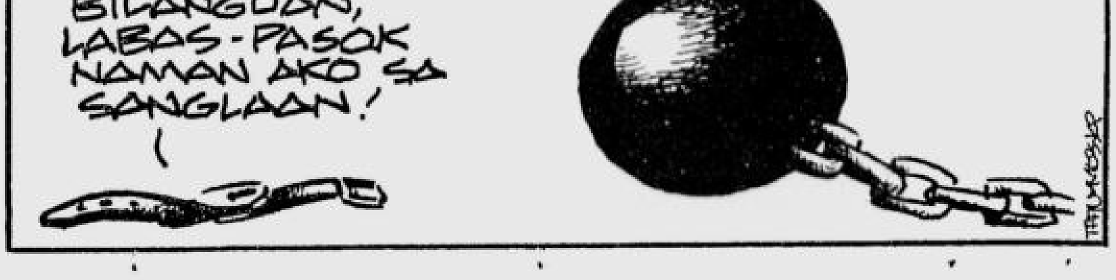
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


HWOOH! TAGAL AH!
PALAGAY KO 'ALA NA 'TO...
haay..
'SANG LINGGO NA, 'ALA PA RIN PROF. NATIN?
SANA 'DI TERROR 'YUN...
SABI NA EH! ETONG HIRAP 'PAG BATA KANG TEACHER, EH!
MAGANDANG UMAGA! SORRY AT LATE AKO.. AKO NGA PALA ANG TEACHER N'YO SA...
HWAHAHA! AN'LAKAS NG TRIP NITO O! HWAHOOY!
HAHAHA
BAKA MAHULI KA, YARI KA!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ISANG ARAW...
MELANIE, MAY SASABIHIN AKO SA 'YO PERO WAG MONG SASABIHIN KAHIT KANINO, HA?
KINABUKASAN...
MELANIE, WAG MO ITONG SASABIHIN KAHIT KANINO, HA?
KINABUKASAN ULI...
MELANIE, BAKIT WALA KANG IMIK? KANINA KA PA TAHIMIK!!
PAANO, LAHAT NG GUSTO KONG SABIHIN... SIKRETO.!!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, KUNG LABAS-PASOK KA SA BILANGUAN, LABAS-PASOK NAMAN AKO SA SANGLAAN!

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Alden Joshua Cedo, Graphics Design
Aries Espinosa, Editor

Business pleasure at Bellevue

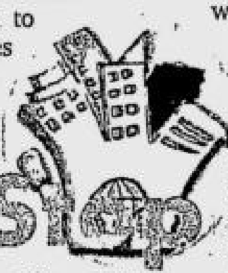
Customers will soon be able to enjoy wireless local area network connection in other areas of the hotel

THE BELLEVUE Hotel, the first 5-star full-service business hotel in Alabang, proudly announces the launch of its new technology to suit the demanding needs of top businessmen and CEOs. Elevating the standards of business hotels in the country, Bellevue introduces the latest in Internet technology by Cisco Systems' Building Broadband Service Manager (BBSM).

"Cisco's BBSM solution enables The Bellevue Hotel to offer broadband Internet connectivity in all of its rooms, banquet facilities, lobby, Café D' Asie Asian Specialty Restaurant, the poolside restaurant and business center. Our customers will soon be able to enjoy wireless local area network connection in other areas of the hotel," explains The Bellevue Hotel MIS manager Daniel Carreon.

This is an addition to the many conveniences Bellevue Hotel has to offer for the busy CEO. The hotel has four function rooms and one main ballroom for briefings and brainstormings, each generously equipped with top-rate furnishings and presentation tools for managers and CEOs who mean business. Three private offices and three workstations are available. The hotel has its own secretarial service that can handle business-related services—typing, letter writing, faxing—24 hours a day, seven days a week.

As The Bellevue is geared up to meet urgent requirements of the traveling businessman, it is also equipped with the necessary amenities for his rest and relaxation. The hotel has the Café D' Asie Asian Specialty Restaurant open for breakfast, lunch, dinner and light snacks. There is also the lively 20/20 entertainment center for a night of live music, cocktails or a game of billiards. In addition, an infinity pool with a poolside restaurant, a fully equipped gym and health spa and its 222 deluxe and suite rooms are sure to give guests the ultimate experience in distinctive hotel living.



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A weekly directory of the country's best establishments

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www.marriott.com

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Ayala Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City
Tel. 813-8888/ Fax 813-5499
www.shangri-la.com

Dusit Hotel Nikko
· Ayala Center, 1223 Makati City Phil.
Tel. 867-3333 Email: dusitmnl@dusit.com
http://manila.dusit.com

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Skyrise Hotel
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Mandarin Oriental Manila
Paseo de Roxas cor. Makati Ave. Makati City
Tel. 750-8888
www.mandarin-oriental.com

The Bellevue Manila
North Bridgeway, Northgate
Alabang, Muntinlupa
Tel. (632) 771-8181/ fax (632) 771-8282
www.thebellevue.com.ph

Waterfront Hotel Lahug
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Waterfront Hotel Mactan
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www.waterfronthotels.net

Royal Mandaya Hotel
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Camp John Hay Manor
Loakan Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 446-0231 to 50

City Travel Hotel
15 Kisad Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 445-0456 / Fax (074) 445-0457

Cooyeesan Hotel Plaza
Naguilian cor. Asin Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074) 447-8888 to 93/ (074) 447-8895 to 98
Fax. (074) 447-0494

Golden Pine Hotel and Restaurant
Intersection of Carino St. and Legarda Road, Baguio City
Tel. (074)444-9965 to 72/740-8975/
Fax. (074) 446-0704

Taal Vista Hotel
Aguinaldo Highway, Tagaytay City
Tel. (046) 413-1000/fax. (046) 413-1225

For Feedback and inquiries, call
899-4426 or 897-8808 loc 209

Mandarin Oriental's pure yoga brings back meditation classes

MANDARIN Oriental, Manila's Pure Yoga studio stages a second run of its basic meditation program beginning July 7, following numerous requests. Prakash Singh Bisht, the hotel's resident yogi, conducts the series of meditative courses focused on purifying one's mind through breathing exercises.

According to Prakash, who studied yoga and its allied disciplines at the reputable Kaivalyadhama GS College of Yoga and Cultural Synthesis, meditation is known to cure stress-related ailments such as insomnia, diabetes and digestive disorders as a consequence of its capacity to reduce stress, manage anger, and alter negative thoughts. It is one of the world's oldest disciplines geared towards achieving physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

He adds that the act of meditation, if done in earnest, brings one to a state of being "where there is no thought, no object, no dream, no desire, nothing —just emptiness". This state of emptiness is said to pave the way for self-discovery, contentment, and total awareness.

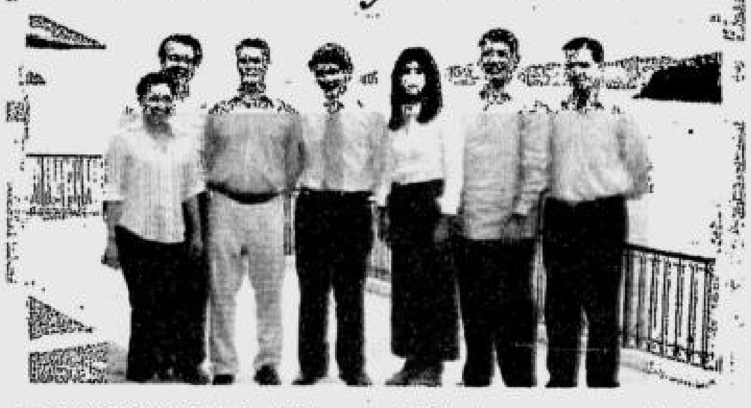
The meditation program, which runs from July 7 to Aug. 2 will be conducted in two batches: July 7 to 19, and July 21 to Aug. 2. Enrollees may choose from either a morning class from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., or an evening class from 8:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; or alternatively, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday with the same time slots.

A full course consists of six one-hour sessions. Each session will accept a minimum of three and a maximum of 12 students.

The meditative courses will be conducted at the Pure Yoga studio on the 18th floor of Mandarin Oriental, Manila. Last day of registration for the first batch is on June 4, Friday. The basic meditation course complements the general yoga classes conducted at the studio, at 7 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., Monday to Saturday.

For more information on Mandarin Oriental, Manila's meditation program and yoga classes, please call 750-8888 extension 2105.

The best of Spanish food as showcased by Fil-Barcelo



THE EVENT titled the "Flavors of Spain: Spanish Gourmet Food Presentation" was a collaboration between the Spanish Commercial Office (ICEX) of the Embassy of Spain and Barceló Hotels and Resorts that showcased Spanish gastronomy in all its hotel and resort properties in the Philippines, namely: The Barceló Pearl Farm Island Resort in Samal Island, Barceló Sarabia Manor Hotel and Convention Center in Iloilo City, Barceló Asturias Hotel in Puerto Princesa, Taal Vista Hotel in Tagaytay City and Barceló Eagle Point Resort in Mabini, Batangas. Recently, special guests were, once again, treated to the same culinary journey to the various flavors and delights that Spain has to offer at the exclusive setting of Peninsula de Punta Fuego in Nasugbu, Batangas. However, the "Flavors of Spain" is not just a highlight of Spanish food, it is, rather, an intimate gathering of people invited to celebrate the new partnership of Landco Pacific Corp. and Roxaco Pacific Corp. with FilBarcelo Hotels and Properties Management Corp. FilBarcelo is the licensed Philippine company of the international chain Barceló Hotels and Resorts that is tasked to manage and operate the exclusive Club Punta Fuego and Terrazas de Punta Fuego. It is a partnership that is expected to elevate service excellence at par with the international quality standards of the Barceló Group. And what better way to celebrate this new partnership than with a Spanish flair?

Shown are FilBarcelo's Officers in the fabulous setting of Club Punta Fuego during the celebration of the "Flavors of Spain": (From left) Susan Salcedo, assistant food and beverage consultant, Alfredo Roca, regional food and beverage consultant, Alex Groizard, general manager of Taal Vista Hotel, Ignacio Gandarias, general manager of Club Punta Fuego, Melotte Mondelo, regional director of sales and marketing-Asia Pacific, John Cogul, CEO of Barceló Hotels and Resorts-Asia Pacific, and Oscar Via, Economic Counselor of the Spanish Embassy.

For more information, call 867-1159 or log on to www.barcelo-asia.com.

Café Lupe's 'Guadalupe Buen Viaje' promo launched

THE CAFÉ Lupe Family Restaurant recently launched the "Guadalupe Buen Viaje" promo as part of celebrating the restaurant's first anniversary and thanking their customers and patrons for the past twelve months. The grand prize for this raffle promo will be a free trip to Mexico for 4 days and 3 nights including a visit to the Miraculous Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The minor prizes include a trip for two to Bacolod and Cebu, Café Lupe gift checks and Our Lady of Guadalupe Holy Rosaries and poster from Mexico.

Its easy to join and be part of this raffle, just dine in Café Lupe Family Restaurant, for a cumulative purchase of food and drinks worth P1,000. Customers are entitled to one raffle ticket, just fill up the form and drop it at designated drop boxes at Café Lupe.

This promotional endeavor is supported by the Embassy of Mexico, sponsored by Mexicana Airlines, Superferry, Maribago Blue Water Beach Resort, and in part by Asiana Airlines, Vortex Gold by Caltex, Rev Magazine, McGraphics Carranz and Lipton.

For booking and reservations, call 899-2145 or 896-3166.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

People, Events & Products

PHILIPPINE BRITISH SOCIETY INDUCTION

British Ambassador Paul Dimond (right) inducted the new officers of the Philippine British Society held at the Ambassador's residence at North Forbes Park Makati led by president Cora Espiritu, other member of the board of directors are (from left) David Reynolds, Viring Ongkeko, Frank Evaristo, Howard Belton, Col. Rey Silvestre, Gill Westaway, vice president Andrew Malpass, president Cora Espiritu, British Ambassador Paul Dimond, lawyer Homobono Adaza, lawyer Sofronio Ona, Robert Hecks and Lily Ylagan.

Public speaking seminar

THE CORPORATE Mind presents "Advanced Public Speaking Course" from July 8 to 10 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Galleria Manila on ADB Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. For registration and bookings for in-house seminars, call 687-7879.

Trilobite navigates in roadshows

TRILOBITE, Electrolux' latest addition in its vacuum cleaner line, will be seen in major malls in the metropolis from July to August of this year. After its successful launch recently, Trilobite is having a road show on the following appliance outlets: Star Appliance SM City North (July 4 to 10); Star Appliance Rockwell (July 4 to 10); Star Appliance SM Southmall (July 13 to 20); SM / Citibank Appliance Fiesta at the SM Megatrade Hall (July 12 to Aug. 3); Star Appliance Podium (July 22 to 25); and Star Appliance SM Megamall (July 27 to 30). For the month of August, Trilobite will be in Anson's Emporium Pasay Road (Aug. 1 to 10); Star Appliance Rockwell (Aug. 5 to 10); and Star Appliance SM Makati (Aug. 12 to 17).

Nina goes to the South

NINA, one of the hottest voices in town will perform at the biggest entertainment hub in Davao - The Venue, on July 5. Nina would surely be rendering a repertoire of different types of songs. Linmarr Suite and Mega Graphics are major sponsors.

'An Affair to Remember'

SPARK Up Events will be presenting "An Affair to Remember" - a wedding and debut event which will gather in one grand affair the country's finest artists and suppliers in the wedding and debut department. This will be held on July 4 to 6 at the activity area of the Alabang Town Center. Guests may avail of specially discounted rates from the participating exhibitors and will also get the chance to win exciting prizes from the sponsors and event partners.

Magazine writing seminar

CORBAN Learning Center will hold a seminar on "Magazine Writing and Editing" to be held on July 5 and 12, from 9 to 12 a.m. The seminar will offer tips on how to get published, and include modules on how to pitch a story to an editor, how to interview, write and edit a feature story. The facilitator, Mona Gonzales, is a veteran journalist of some 20 years, published overseas and in most local publications. Interested parties may call Corban at 842-6665 / 0917-6297718 / 809-3050, or visit Unit F, MB Aguirre Bldg., President's Ave. cor. Elizalde St., BF Commercial Center Parañaque City.

Chocolate molding seminar

SWEETS N More tutorial school, due to numerous requests, will again have a chocolate molding seminar on July 5, 1:30 p.m. and a special Sunday class on July 6, 8:30 a.m. Registration fee of P1,000 includes the starter kit, snacks and a play areafor children. In addition, a basic and advanced one-day candle-making seminar will be offered on July 5 and a special class on July 6. Fee of P1,650 includes includes a starter kit, lunch, snacks and hands-on training for only a limited number of students. The seminar will be conducted near the LRT V. Cruz, DLSU Taft. For reservations and inquiries, text or call 0916-8758704. Package discounts will be given for students who will enroll in both courses.

Poor sports in sportsmanship event

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

HOW ironic that an event intended to promote sportsmanship, the Star Olympics, turned out to be a clash of egos. The brawl that erupted between **Jinggoy Estrada** and **Richard Gomez** gives the annual sports competition a bad name.

It is said that Goma got peeved when Jinggoy nudged him in the nape during their basketball match. Goma was unduly provoked but Jinggoy was quick to apologize.

For Goma's part, he dared Jinggoy to continue their fistfight outside the hardcourt.

It's not the first time that Goma got into a fight during the Star Olympics. Some years back he also had altercations with **Bong Revilla** and **Robin Padilla.**

It's just a ball game, after all. Anyone who's familiar with basketball knows that due to the adrenaline rush, some players tend to get physical without being aware of it.

Basketball is no game for wimps.

Following Goma's tiff with **Ai-ai de las Alas**, after he claimed on "S-Files" that Ai-Ai's movie "Tanging Ina" really didn't make a killing at the box office, now he's up against Jinggoy.

Why can't he accept Jinggoy's apology and also the fact that Ai-Ai's movie is a certified hit?

Guess list

Guess who is this stage mother who pissed off the staff of a big company when they got her daughter/actress to grace a promo blitz for their latest product. The mom had the audacity to ask the secretary (whom she mistook for a messenger even if the secretary was clad in corporate attire) why the down payment was in check and not in cash. She did not like to go out of her way to encash the check and she even insinuated that the check might bounce. The secretary was floored because she works for a reputable company and it's S.O.P. for them to issue checks as payment for talents they hire. "I've dealt with bigger stars before and I never encountered such shabby treatment from them," the secretary said.

Guess who are this matinee idol and this dramatic actress who had a six-month romance but managed to keep it discreet. Eventually their managers intervened so the secret lovers had to part ways. Love moves in mysterious ways, and so does some career moves.

Avril repackaged

Avril Lavigne's smash hit debut album has been repackaged and improved.

The album includes the hits "Complicated," "Losing Grip," "I'm with You," and "sk8r Boi." It also comes with a bonus disc which includes footage from "A Day in the Life," and her first fouro music videos.

It also includes two new great tracks, "Get Over It" and "Why."

Dish serves The Rage

THE RAGE Band rocks Dish

Relive your memories of the decade that gave the world the sound of pop, the unforgettable '80s.

The Rage Band, headed by its original members Juan Miguel Salvador and Marissa Buñag, kicks off its weekly Thursday concerts at Dish in The Power Plant Mall in Rockwell starting today, July 3.

After the show, the evening continues with the DJ providing '80s music for non-stop dancing.

Personal

Congrats to soon-to-be-wed beautiful couple Arnold Valencia and Liz'l Tayanes. May you love happily ever after!

For feedback, e-mail friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com

MTV Networks bag 75 awards

MTV Networks bagged a total of 75 awards at the 25th annual Promax and BDA Design Awards in Los Angeles on June 4 to 6.

The awards are recognized as the ultimate accolade for outstanding design contributions to the broadcast media industry.

MTV Networks brought home eight platinum, 16 gold, 23 silver, 18 bronze awards and 10 honorable mentions for creative excellence on VH1, MTV and Nickelodeon channels.

In Asia, MTV Networks Asia won a platinum award in the "Non-News, In-House Logo—Animation" category. In the same category, the 2003 MTV Asia Awards logo animation won an honorable mention.

The 2003 MTV Asia Awards show packaging also bagged an honorable mention in the "Total Package Design, Topical On-Air" category.

Nickelodeon Asia won a silver in the "Funniest Promo" category for "Arm Pit Music".

David Flack, senior vice president, Creative and Content, MTV Networks Asia, said, "We at MTV Networks Asia, together with our creative teams worldwide, continue to explore new grounds in the creative realm and to serve up the very best to our ever-evolving target audiences on VH1, MTV and Nickelodeon across regional and local levels."

MTV Networks' platinum awards also include those for non-news, out-of-house ID (MTV Image: VJ Teppei/Glover/Maiko, MTV Japan; cable channels and networks, branding/image campaign, for MTV Networks Latin America; in-house program promotion, All Access Weekend, MTV Networks Latin America;

promotional animation campaign, for Estás en Nick animation çampaign, Nickelodeon Latin America; public service announcement, Signed Rugrats Nickelodeon UK; and children's program, for Music Monster, Nickelodeon UK.

NICKELODEON Asia's "Armpit Music" won a silver award for "funniest promo."

Araneta Center

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	MUNTING TINIG
Ali 2	MGA BABAE SA VI ROOM
Ali 3	DUMB AND DUMBERER
Ali 4	CHARLIE'S ANGELS
Ali 5	THE HUNTED
Ali 6	CHARLIE'S ANGELS
Ali 7	28 DAYS LATER

ARANETA COLISEUM	
JULY 4 & 6	PBA GAMES
JULY 5	MARTIN & REGINE CONCERT
JULY 12	UAAP OPENING CEREMONIES
JULY 13	UAAP GAMES
JULY 25 & 26	DON MOEN CONCERT
AUG 02	JUST ONCE.. GREATEST HITS
Opens December 2003	DISNEY ON ICE Featuring "Beauty & The Beast"

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM
B	CHARLIES ANGELS 2
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	TUMITIBOK KUMIKIROT
CINEMA-2	MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM
CINEMA-3	BRUCE ALMIGHTY
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	CHARLIES ANGELS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	HULK
CINEMA-6	HULING BIRHEN SA LUPA
CINEMA-7	ANG TANGING INA
CINEMA-8	PANGARAP KO ANG IBIGIN KA
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	CHARLIES ANGELS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	CHARLIES ANGELS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	28 DAYS LATER
CINEMA-12	DUMB AND DUMBERER
CINEMA-14	THE HUNTED
CINEMA-15	MUNTING TINIG
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	HOW TO A GUY IN 10 DAYS
CINEMA 2	OPERATION BALIKATAN
CINEMA 3	ALAB NG LAHI
CINEMA 4	SO CLOSE
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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THE HUNTED R13 12:10, 2:10, 4:10, 6:10, 8:10, 10:10	CHARLIE'S ANGELS: FULL THROTTLE PG13 11:30, 1:50, 4:10, 6:30, 8:50	CHARLIE'S ANGELS: FULL THROTTLE PG13 1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30

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8 ways to let go

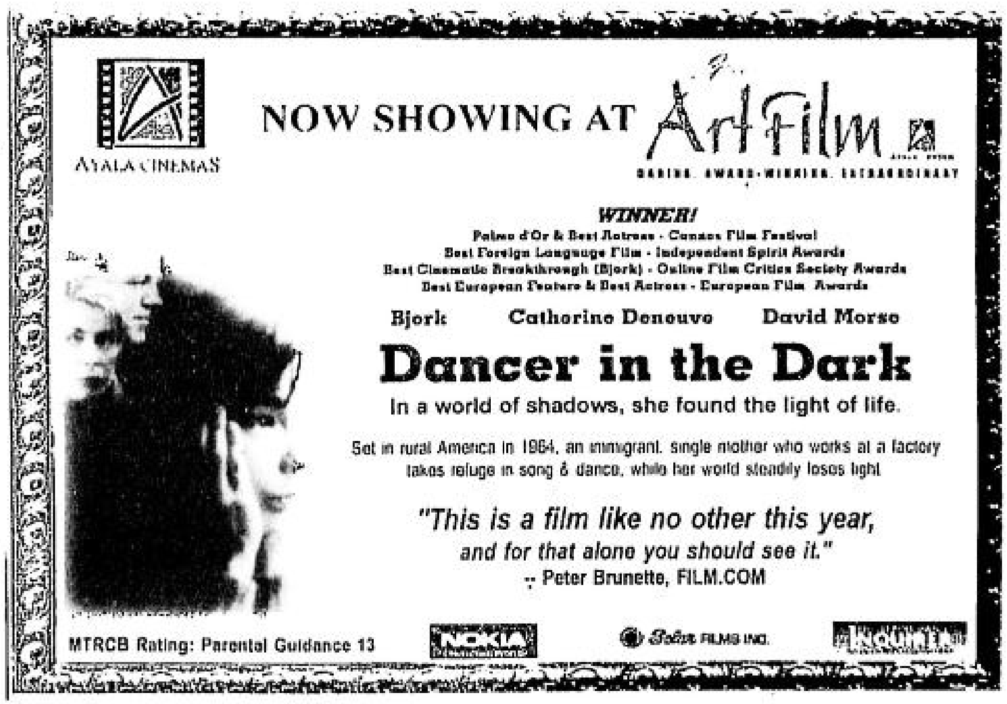
THE CD album, "The Art Of Letting Go," has been released by MCA Universal.

It includes "Tattooed On My Mind" by D' Sound, "Stranded" by Jennifer Paige, "Separate Loves" by Stephen Bishop, "The Day You Went Away" by Wendy Matthews, "Stay" by Lisa Loeb, "Out Of Reach" by Gabrielle, "In This Life" by Ronan Keating, "One Last Cry" by Brian McKnight, "Insensitive" by Jann Arden, "You're In Love" by Wilson Philips, "4 Seasons of Loneliness" by BoyzIIMen, and the title track by Mikaila .

SHOW TIME

HANS TAKES WALLSTREET

TV host and model Hans Montenegro has been chosen to be the new endorser of Wallstreet for his style and fashion sense. Made of imported materials, Wallstreet is available at all leading department stores nationwide.



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Bjork Catherine Deneuve David Morse
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In a world of shadows, she found the light of life.
Set in rural America in 1964, an immigrant, single mother who works at a factory takes refuge in song & dance, while her world steadily loses light.
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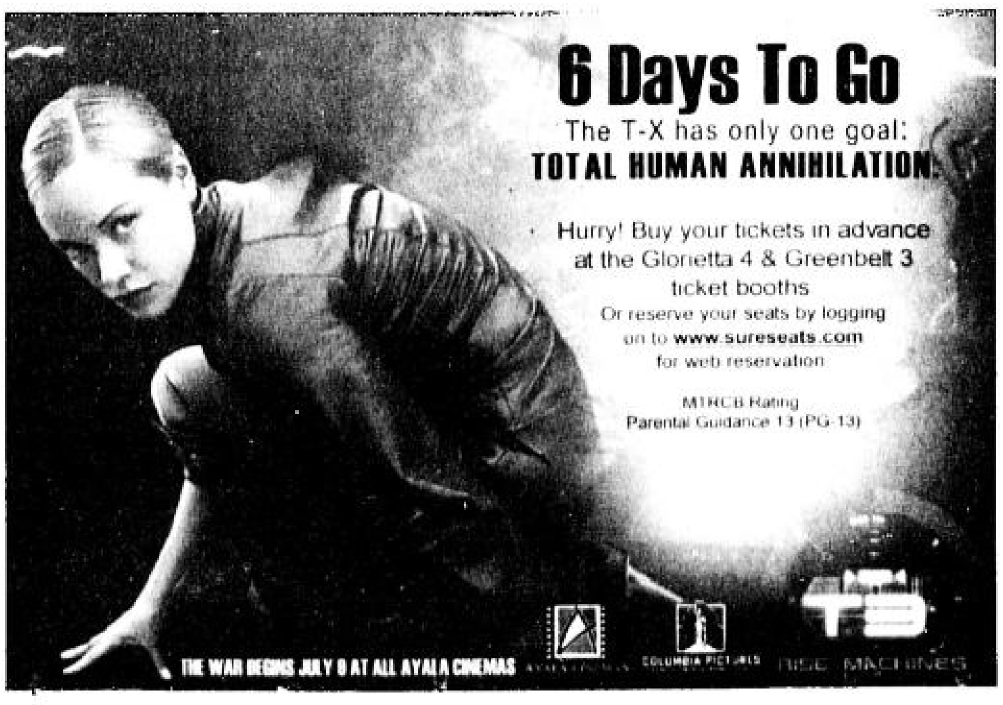

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COLUMBIA PICTURES T3 RISE OF THE MACHINES

Tribute to National Artists

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ON July 11 and 12, some of the country's top performing stars will pay tribute to the country's National Artists, especially the newly conferred National Artists of 2003, at the CCP, by way of a two-hour musical-theater presentation, "Lagi Kitang Mamahalin."

The special tribute will feature musical pieces arranged for today's audiences, with novelty numbers fusing the idioms of rap and rave, as well as some excerpts from *zarzuelas*.

The concert promotes the works of our national artists, especially among the youth. It will also raise funds for the proposed National Artists Gallery.

Performers include Sharon Cuneta, Regine Velasquez, Lani Misalucha, Jolina Magdangal, Vina Morales, Verni Varga, Paolo Santos, Sheila Francisco and Eugene Villaluz, with the Philippine Philarmonic Orchestra, Tanghalang Pilipino, the Bayanihan Philippine National Dance Co., the Philippine Madrigal Singers, Ballet Philippines, and the UP College of Music.

Thinking beyond the concert, what more can we do to pay tribute to our National Artists? We've asked around, and some artists have come up with these additional inputs:

Focusing first on the new National Artists for 2003: Eddie Romero should be honored with a film retrospective and a book.

Salvador Bernal's theater designs should be showcased in a book and a touring exhibit using dioramas. In addition, he could be persuaded to hold a master design workshop for gifted production designers.

There should also be a major retrospective of Jose Joya's artworks. And Virgilio Almario's works should be compiled in new editions, one for each area among his diverse literacy interests.

Particular emphasis should be placed on making the new National Artists available to the mass media, so the audience for their works can be broadened, and many more people can be exposed to their artistic excellence and be inspired by it.

Some people suggest that the new National Artists should go on a speaking tour of schools so that young people can learn firsthand from them and be edified by their example.

What about our other National Artists? They should also be played up in the media, and their works should be showcased in revival productions. This is particularly important for the older artists, whose works tend to be forgotten, or are not known to the youth.

How do we fund all of these projects? Business firms and foundations could be given a list of our National Artists, with each artist getting a sponsor to support the projects lined up for that particular artist. That way, the National Artists will be showcased as individuals, rather than as a group, so people's appreciation of them will be more specific and personal.

Our National Artists have contributed so much to our life as a nation, and deserve all of the praise and appreciation they get -- and more! Let's all do what we can to give them the attention and importance that is their due from this hopefully grateful nation.

'OPTV'

"OPTV," a weekly show about overseas Filipinos, is telecast every Monday night at 11 p.m. over RPN 9. It is being replayed on Channel 9 every Wednesday morning at 10.

The show is now being telecast overseas on the Filipino Channel, so it can be viewed by Filipinos in Australia, the United States, the Middle East and Japan. "OPTV" is hosted by Kata Inocencio, Richard Merk, Inah Borra and Tonette Quiogue, scripted by Manny Castañeda and directed by Don Escudero.

Movies on TV

On NBO, Thursday, July 3, at 8:15 a.m., "Little Shop of Horrors." 2:30 p.m., "The Golden Child." Friday, July 4, at 9 p.m., "Cats and Dogs." 10:30 p.m., "Six Feet Under" (finale special).

On Cinemax, Thursday, July 3, at 2 p.m., "A Place in the Sun." 7:30 p.m., "Dead Reckoning." Friday, July 4, 6 a.m., "Full Disclosure." 12:45 p.m., "Once Upon a Christmas.", 5:15 p.m., "Mercy Streets."

Feedback

From Paul R. Mortel: I would like to call the attention of the people behind `Idol Ko Si Kap' on Channel 7 to the fact that the Philippine flag at the sitcom's barangay office set is incorrectly displayed: The red portion of the flag is on the left of the beholder.

"The correct display should be with the blue portion of the flag on the viewer's left. I hope this error can be corrected soonest."

Nina at The Venue

Young singer Nina performs at The Venue in Davao City on Saturday, July 5.

Show sponsors include Linmarr Suites and Mega Graphics.

`Temptation Island'

Joey Gosiengfiao's sexy cult movie "Temptation Island" is now a stage play, which will be performed from July 3 to 6 at the CCP's Tanghalang Huseng Batute. It's about four beauty pageant contestants who find themselves marooned on an island with some men.

The twist in this stage version is that the female roles will be played by male thespians. The cast includes Romnick Sarmenta, John Lapus, Christian Vasquez, Reggie Curley, Tuxqs Rutaquio, Peter Serrano, Neil Ryan Sese, Ricci Tan, Raymond Sydney and Face Sales. Call Ticketworld at 891-5610 or the CCP Box Office at 832-1125.

ROMERO

BERNAL

Richard files raps vs Jinggoy

By Marinel R. Cruz

ACTOR and TV talk show host Richard Gomez yesterday filed charges of grave threat and slight physical injury against fellow actor Jinggoy Estrada.

Gomez also filed charges of slander and oral defamation against Estrada before prosecutor Lorna Lee at the Antipolo City Regional Trial Court, according to Gomez's lawyer, Banjo Navarro.

Estrada, son of deposed President Joseph Estrada and former mayor of San Juan, hit Gomez in the head last June 29 during a goodwill basketball game in the Star Olympics at the Philsports Arena in Pasig City.

Estrada had apologized to Gomez on TV Monday night, but said Gomez had provoked him.

"Based on the videotape, which has been repeatedly shown on television, Gomez was hit in the head and was cursed by Estrada several times," lawyer Navarro told Inquirer Entertainment last night.

Gomez had said Estrada apologized because "he wanted to be the underdog."

"He is out on bail and cannot afford to lose his freedom by getting into trouble," Gomez added.

Estrada and his father, deposed President Joseph Estrada, were detained at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City on plunder charges for two years until the younger Estrada was released last March 7.

Broadway ...

From page A24

spread across much of the city.

Up on 76th Street, where "Tea at Five," a one-person show about Hepburn starring Kate Mulgrew, plays at the Promenade Theater, Mulgrew was expected to ask the audience to join a moment of silence after her curtain call.

Ann Cody came down from Stamford, Connecticut, to see the Hepburn show with her grown daughters, Erin Cody and Beth Ann Cody-Rieck, "My daughters and I have always loved Katharine Hepburn," she said. "We felt this was special, especially tonight."

Hepburn first appeared on the Broadway stage in 1928 in "These Days," which ran for just eight performances. She appeared in 11 shows during her storied career, including a star turn in "The Philadelphia Story," in 1939-1940.

She was twice nominated for Tony Awards; in 1970 as best actress in a musical for "Coco" and in 1982 as best actress in a play for "The West Side Waltz." *Reuters*

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Watch the series of MONOLOGUES with Epi Quizon, Angel Aquino and Pinky Amador and piece these stories together.
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June 25, 7 pm at Delifrance Area.
GREENBELT 2 **Monologues and SERENADES** July 2, 7 pm
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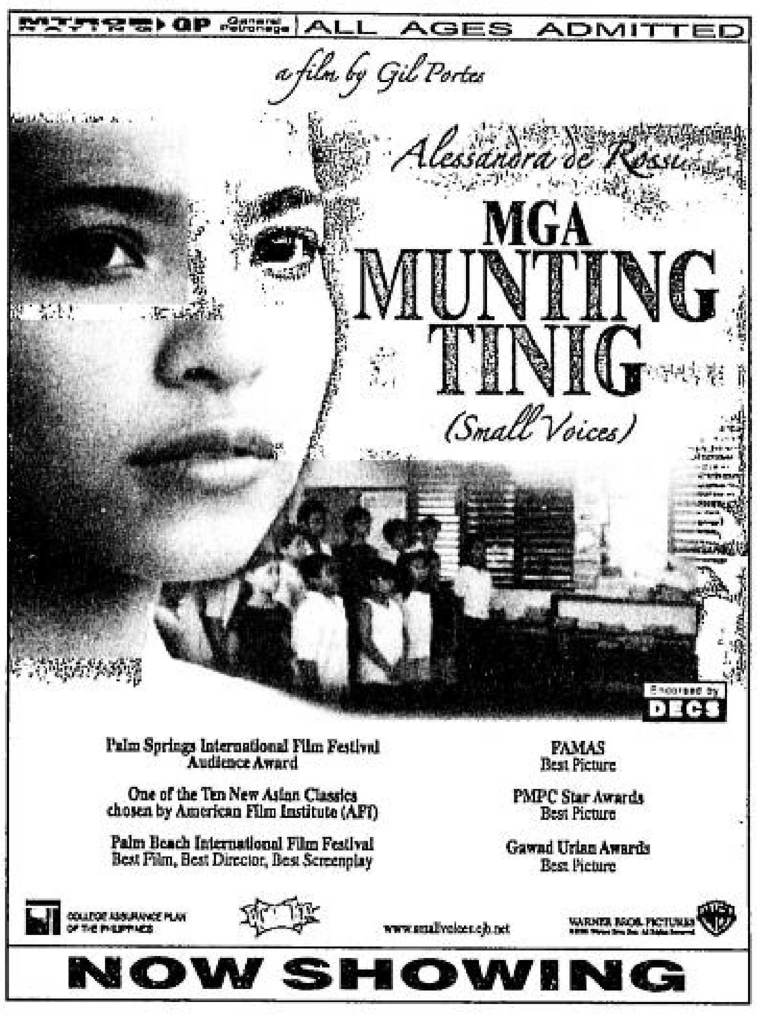

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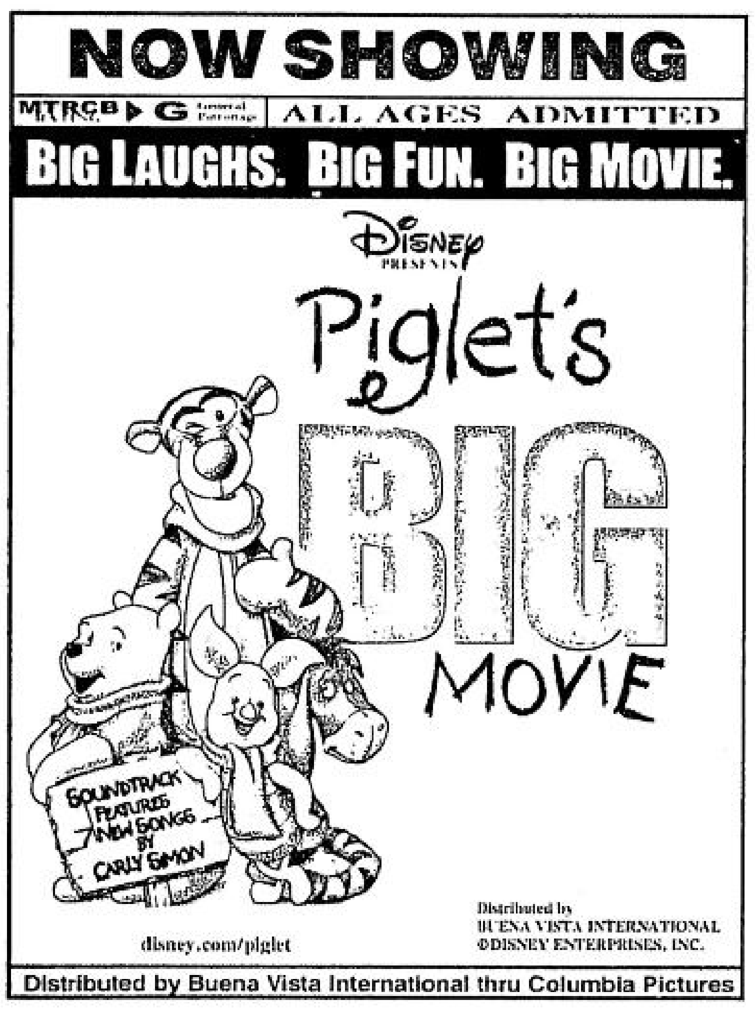

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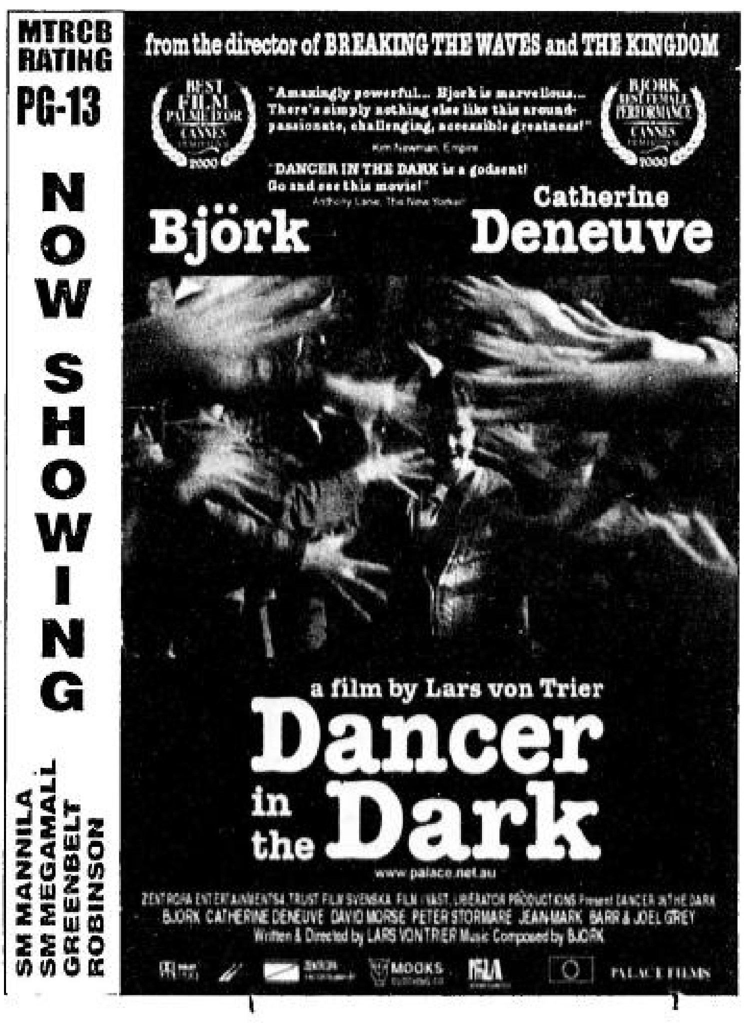

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Osang serving 1-year suspension

KBP says she violated rules on vulgarity; Alma takes over while GMA 7 appeals

By Marinel R. Cruz

ACTRESS and television host Rosanna "Osang" Roces has not been seen on the Saturday afternoon talk show "Star Talk" on GMA 7 for a month now because she is serving a 12-month suspension imposed by the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) for vulgarity.

According to the KBP resolution, the suspension was based on a complaint from the KBP's monitoring unit about Roces' "Star Talk" interview with guest actor Paolo Fabregas that was aired on Oct. 9, 1999.

Inquirer Entertainment obtained a copy of the KBP resolution.

The KBP also suspended for the same length of time the membership privileges of GMA Network Inc. for failing to establish a "rigid fail-safe mechanism in the editing of taped materials scheduled for broadcast within its live programs."

Alma Moreno has taken over Roces' hosting job on the show biz talk show.

GMA Network officer-in-charge for corporate communications Butch Raquel refused to comment on the suspension. He only said, "This is not a court case. We cannot comment."

The KBP had initially issued a suspension order dated March 31, 2000. GMA 7 filed an appeal on June 27 of 2001, and a second appeal last June 27 or exactly two years later.

The suspension order said Roces violated Section A (Paragraph 9) and Section M (Paragraph 1.a) of the program standards of the KBP's Television Code.

Section A, Paragraph 9 of the code states, "Programs shall not use dialogues, actions and other similar manifestations which are obscene, blasphemous, profane, derogatory or vulgar."

Section M, Paragraph 1.a states that "coarse, vulgar jokes which may offend the sensibilities of the audience and the viewers shall be taboo. Included in the category of vulgar jokes are off-color jokes or double entendre jokes."

The KBP said the Roces interview in question covered several topics, including "highly suggestive questions" about Fabregas' preferred perfume and underwear, and one-night stands, and "the hardest muscle of his body that he tends to work out often."

The decision said Roces massaged Fabregas' right thigh and asked him, "*Meron pa bang mas ha-*hard *diyan?*"

'Clear violation'

When Fabregas responded by saying he preferred a woman's natural scent over perfumes, Roces stood up, leaned close to him and pushed his face against her chest, the KBP said.

Toward the end of the interview, Roces said, "*Don* Jaime (Fabregas, Paolo's father), *matagal ko nang sinasabi sa iyo, kailangan malahian mo ako. Eto na po ang pagkakataon malahian.*"

The KBP said GMA failed to justify Roces' actions in the interview.

In its letter of explanation in November 1999, GMA had said Roces "has always treated her guests with both fun and candor, and definitely without malice or vulgarity intended" and that "the guest (Fabregas) was game during the interview."

But the KBP ruled that (Roces') "dialogue was, in fact, vulgar and clearly in violation of the provisions of the TV Code,"

Clarification

Following the March 2000 suspension order of the KBP, GMA 7 filed a motion for reconsideration on June 27, 2001 and sought the cancellation of the 12-month suspension of its membership privileges. The KBP denied the motion.

GMA 7 filed another motion for reconsideration last June 27, seeking clarification of which membership privileges were suspended. It pointed out that the KBP resolution did not specify whether the network was still eligible to participate in KBP elections.

"The penalty imposed upon (GMA 7) is unreasonable and unfair," the network's motion stated.

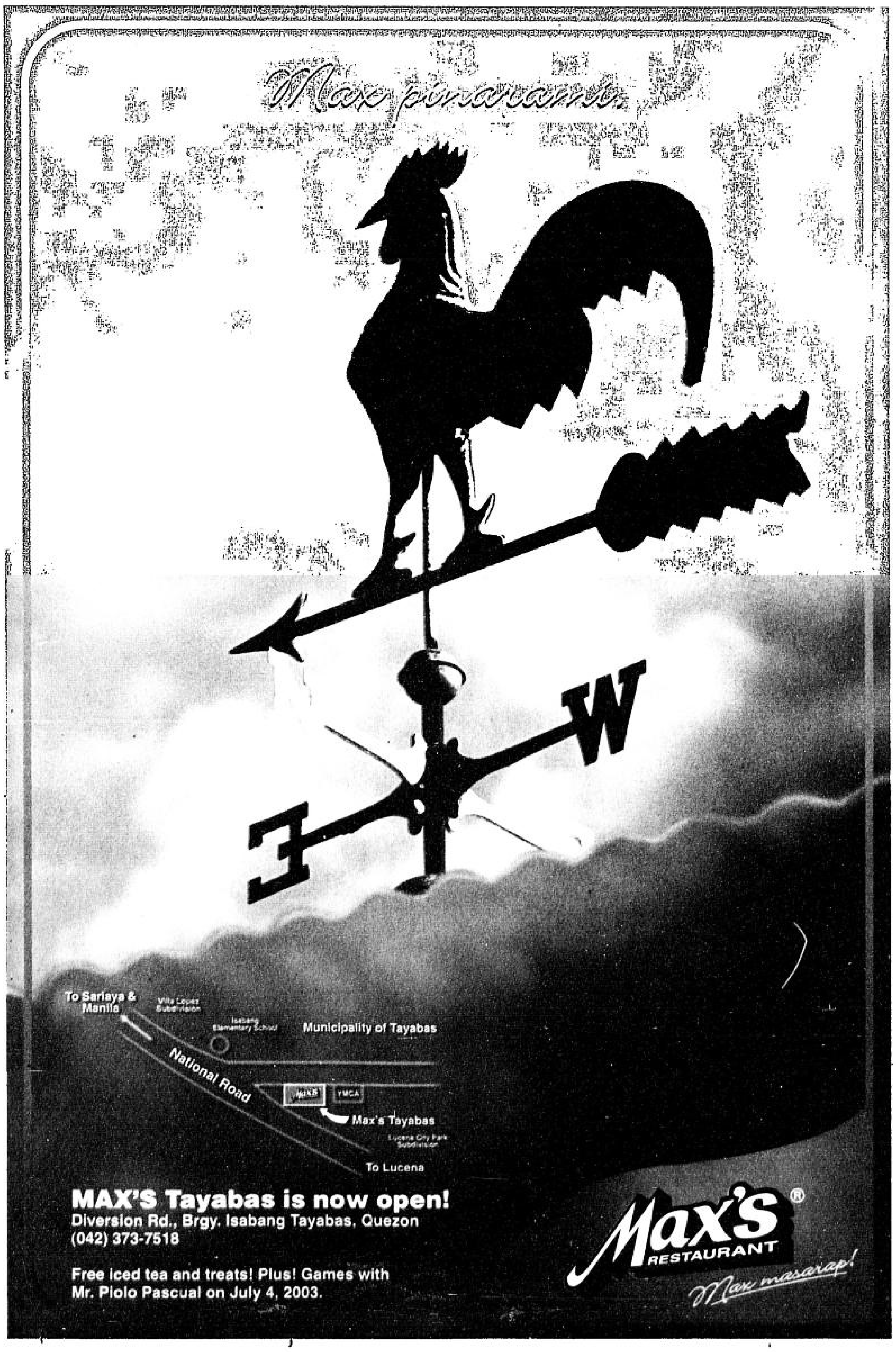
The network also reasoned out that the suspension is the penalty for a second offense in accordance with the TV Code.

"The offense found by KBP Standard Authority should really be deemed a first offense," GMA 7's second motion said. "Hence, the penalty of suspension of privileges is not proper."

THE SUSPENSION of Roces (in file photo) stemmed from an interview on "Star Talk" with Fabregas (above) aired in October 1999.

DID YOU KNOW...

Seen malling at the Alabang Town Center last Sunday night was sexy star **Maureen Larrazabal**, who was with her non-show biz partner and two children and their their nannies. The eyewitness wasn't sure if the kids were Maureen's.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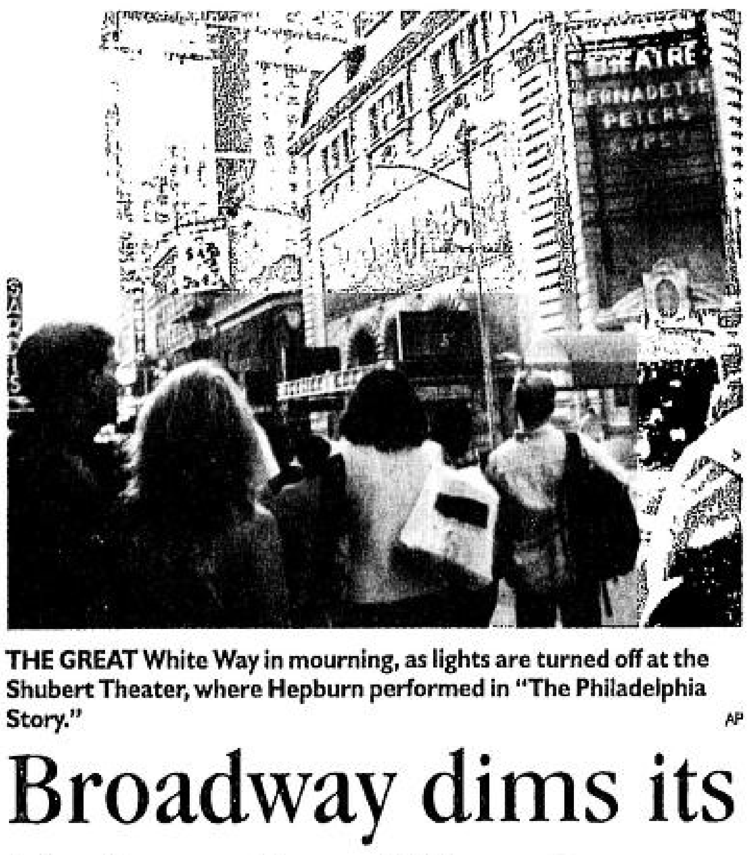

THE GREAT White Way in mourning, as lights are turned off at the Shubert Theater, where Hepburn performed in "The Philadelphia Story." AP

Broadway dims its lights for Hepburn

NEW YORK—Broadway dimmed its lights on Tuesday in tribute to stage and screen legend Katharine Hepburn, who died on Sunday at age 96.

The 23 Broadway theaters aimed to darken their marquees in a silent tribute to the actress at 8 p.m., just before most shows were due to raise their curtains.

The choreography of the tribute was fumbled as some theaters failed to turn off their lights, but outside the Shubert Theater on 44th Street, crowds of theatergoers were joined by passersby who stopped to gaze at the marquees.

"It's a lovely tribute," said Monty Arnold of New York, before entering the Shubert to see "Gypsy." "She deserves it."

Tributes to the beloved actress

BROADWAY/ A23

BUSINESS

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BIR, Customs collections in June on track

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE MACAPAGAL administration is on track in keeping the budget deficit on target for the third consecutive month and would likely contain the budget gap below its P15-billion ceiling for June, government sources said.

The Bureau of Customs yesterday said that based on preliminary data, collections in June reached P8.83 billion, 6.9 percent more than the P8.26-billion target and 15.8 percent higher than last year's P7.62 billion.

In the first six months, Customs said it delivered P52.55 billion to state coffers, or 15.8 percent higher than the goal of P47.5 billion and 18.3 percent more compared to P44.4 billion in January to June last year.

"I must credit the efforts of all district collectors for the good performance of Customs. We are really exerting all efforts to deliver as much as we can," said Customs Commissioner Antonio Bernardo.

Customs collects about 20 percent of the government's annual revenues while much of the remaining 80 percent has to be raised by the Bureau of Internal Revenue. Other agencies also generate revenue from fees and charges.

Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno said his bureau's target last month was P31 billion and based on the collections of the large taxpayers' unit, the numbers should be on track.

Parayno said the large taxpayers' group, which accounts for 60 percent of total collection, had already slightly exceeded its P17.4-billion target for June. Collection reports from the district offices should start coming in by Friday.

The government must contain the deficit to P47 billion in the second quarter and to do this, revenues must hit at least P285.5 billion while spending should not exceed P387.8 billion.

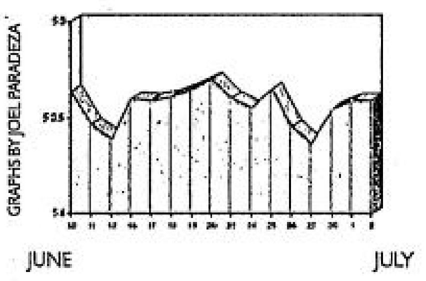
The deficits in April and May were both below the targets of P12 billion and P20 billion.

The BIR and Customs must deliver P424 billion and P100.56 billion to state coffers this year as both agencies vowed to continue implementing reforms that would ensure that last year's revenue shortfall would not be repeated.

Poor collection of the BIR and Customs last year pushed the deficit to P210.7 billion against an original target of P130 billion. Meeting revenue targets would allow the government to keep its budget deficit within the P202-billion ceiling fort this year.

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 53.41 = $1
As of 5 p.m., July 2, 2003

Y 119.22 = $1
As of 5 p.m., July 2, 2003

GOLD: $350.50-351.30
per ounce Hong Kong, July 2, 2003

TUESDAY'S peso-dollar rate was 53.41 to $1 and not 51.665 as printed in yesterday's issue.

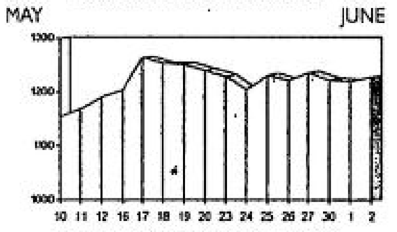
STOCK MARKET

Shares end higher

SHARES ended higher yesterday on bargain hunting of select blue chips, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange index ended up 6.85 points, or 0.6 percent, at 1,227.96, after Tuesday's 0.1 percent fall.

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Globe Telecom was among the most actively traded stocks, and was up P5, or 0.8 percent, at P620 on follow-through bargain hunting.

The stock has steadily risen since Friday, the day news broke that one of the mobile phone company's major shareholders, DeTeAsia Holdings GMBH, a Deutsche Telekom unit, has offered its 24.8-percent stake in Globe to its fellow shareholders—Ayala Corp., which owns 32.7 percent of Globe, and Singapore Telecom International Pte. Ltd., a unit of Singapore Telecommunications Ltd., which holds 29.1 percent.

Some investors have been speculating that Globe shares on the block will likely fetch a premium over the market price since the shares account for a substantial stake in the mobile phone firm.

Ayala Corp. was another actively traded issue, and was up 15 centavos, or 3.4 percent, at P4.60. Analysts have said it will be to Ayala Corp.'s advantage to exercise its right on the Globe shares DeTeAsia is

SHARES/ B2

George Yang bags 25-hectare Boni land deal

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BASES Conversion Development Authority yesterday awarded to Alliance Global Group Inc., a publicly listed company chaired by McDonald's Philippine franchise holder George Yang, the right to develop the 25-hectare Lawton Parkway in Fort Bonifacio.

In a notice of award sent by BCDA president and CEO Rufo Colayco, the state agency formally informed AGI it had submitted "the best and most advantageous proposal."

AGI was asked to execute a joint-venture contract with the BCDA for the property not later than Sept. 1.

The property will be developed by AGI, through a joint venture with the BCDA, into a P5.86-billion residential enclave within seven years.

GEORGE/ B2

FOR SALE
FOR SALE

A BUYER checks out a 22 passenger jeepney for sale at a shop in Manila. The locally made jeep made mostly of stainless steel body and a second hand Japanese diesel engines sells for P370,000 ($7,400). The jeep is the Philippines' popular means of public transport. Jeep builders use popular and very bright and colorful designs to make it look attractive in the street.

AFP

a.
b.
c.
d.
e.
a. Chrome Grill
b. Original Mopar Running Board
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d. Disc Brakes (front and rear) ABS w/ EVBP (Electronic Variable Brake Positioning) Enhancement to ABS, automatically adopts to vehicle load & road surface conditions
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Sleep of the tongue

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

HOUSTON, we have a problem—a biiig problem!

The head watchman of the government, Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo, seems to be sleeping. For why is he doing nothing about the horror stories we hear on the MIAA?

That's the Manila International Airport Authority, the state corporation managing the busiest international airport in the country, thus making it a gold mine for its officials.

The MIAA head is Edgardo Manda. He used to stay at a government housing project in Mandaluyong. Luckily, this cute administration of Gloriaetta came to power.

Manda is said to be close, personally, to somebody big at the Palace. Before you know it, he is already occupying a nice house in an exclusive village in Makati City.

Okay, Manda is probably just renting the place, even if, in a plush subdivision in Makati, it costs a fortune to rent just a dirty smelly washroom.

* * *

ALSO, luckily for Manda, the Ombudsman Marcelo likes to sit on cases involving bigshots at the MIAA who, based on findings of his own office, should be in jail by now.

From out of nowhere, Marcelo hit the public screen and became famous as a "private" prosecuting lawyer in the impeachment of the man named Band ... Wrist Band.

It turned out that Marcelo, just like a number of other lawyers who occupy sensitive positions in this cute administration today, was part of ... well, THE Firm.

Of course you know what that is! In business, they all know that THE Firm is the former Carpio Villaraza Cruz law office. Oops. Excuse me, Your Honor!

* * *

FROM what I gathered, anyway, Manda has a good friend going by the initials MN, who entered into a big-time real estate deal with the MIAA at the Naia.

Okay, the deal obtained the approval of the MIAA board, apparently thanks to Manda's not-so-subtle endorsement.

But employees of the MIAA still cannot figure out why Manda, accompanied by MN himself, left for pre-SARS Hong Kong on board PR 310 only last September.

For that matter, Manda flies to Hong Kong often, together with his entire family and a certain SW, just because SW enjoys big concessions at the Naia 2.

Among employees of the MIAA, that Manda even has an office of his own at SW's headquarters, is an open secret.

From what I heard, Ombudsman Marcelo received documented complaints from MIAA employees regarding Manda. Somebody please wake him up quick!

* * *

ALL right, it is possible that certain MIAA employees have an ax to grind against Manda. A lot of them got thrown out of their positions in Manda's famous reshuffle.

Upon assuming the MIAA position under this cute administration, that terrific guy removed key finance people. He then replaced them with some questionable characters.

Today, for instance, the big boss in MIAA is a woman who, according to MIAA employees, got the position without the approval of the MIAA board.

The woman is said to have pending cases of "extortion" at the Pasay City trial courts—well, only two cases.

Not only that, even the Office of the Ombudsman itself has unpleasant findings on her. Yet nothing is happening. Everything is quiet. Somebody probably bit his tongue or he is just sleeping. What's that—sleep of the...

* * *

FOR instance, the Ombudsman's Fact-Finding and Intelligence Bureau reported that the woman goes abroad more often than a flight attendant.

She has been to the United States, Sweden, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Taiwan—countless of times, and on her personal expense, at that!

The bureau is trying hard to figure out how a government employee like her, who receives about P25,000 a month, max, could afford such expensive trips.

No wonder, they recommended the filing of charges against the woman. For what? Well, for one, for withholding info that she has pending extortion cases.

That is the kind of people who gain the trust and confidence of Manda, who enjoys the backing of somebody big at the Palace. No wonder, the Ombudsman is mum! Do you hear somebody snoring?

* * *

AGRARIAN Reform Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan must be praying for a recovery in the real estate business. It's the only way he can do his job.

Today, you see, the DAR chief's biggest headache is money. Obet does not have a lot of it. Okay, he does not have enough.

The department asked for a budget of P18 billion. Because Congress liked landless farmers very much, it gave DAR all of P7 billion.

That's about 38 percent of the money which DAR figured it would need to do a good job reforming the agrarian whatever.

And so Obet must try to raise money by becoming a real estate salesman. For sale, for instance, are the Payanig sa Pasig lot at the Ortigas Center.

Nobody envies Obet, really, because at this time, nobody wants to put any money on a commercial real estate project—not even just a cross-eyed centavo.

* * *

ACTUALLY, that P18 billion is what the Presidential Agrarian Reform Council, or PARC, recommended for the agrarian reform fund--for the CARP.

With a P7-billion budget, Obet cannot even run the department. It needs P9 billion just for day-to-day operation.

But that's the story of their life in public service. Every year, every agency must submit a budget proposal to the Department of Budget and Management. Every year!

Doing the budget, nevertheless, entails a lot of work, as my kids will tell you. To do that, the various government agencies must look deep into all their programs.

After all the work coming up with the budget, the agencies then receive word from the DBM that, in effect, their work is useless.

The DBM proceeds to dictate upon the various agencies what their individual budget should be. They work again.

I mean, why can't the DBM, at the beginning of the whole exercise, tell everybody their limits?

Well, that's less time wasted, I guess, for government agencies. This is just not done. In the government, not wasting anything is a nightmare.

* * *

ANYWAY, in the DAR's case, from a proposed budget of P18 billion, the DBM slashed it to P9 billion, which Congress found too generous and slashed to P7 billion.

Unfortunately, the effect of the slash will be felt in the agrarian reform program.

After the haggling with the DBM, the DAR as a department, minus the CARP fund, got a budget of P5.8 billion. Congress did not touch it anymore.

Slashed, actually, and slashed big-time, was the funding for the agrarian reform program. That's why Obet must now try to raise money by selling real estate. Good luck!

FRUIT OF DEBT RESTRUCTURING

Metro Pacific sees turnaround

By Doris C. Dumlao

METRO Pacific Corp., the local holding firm of Hong Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd., is confident of a financial turnaround this year after operating in the red in the last two years.

Jose Ma. Lim, MPC's newly appointed president and CEO, yesterday told reporters the company would likely chalk up "hundreds of millions" of pesos in net profit this year as the company continued to reap the fruits of its debt-restructuring program.

"It will be in the black this year but to sustain profitability, we have to generate values for our properties," Lim said, noting that MPC was generating windfall from dacion en pago or asset swap deals with creditors.

MPC incurred P11.88 billion in losses in 2002 and P21.1 billion in 2001 mainly due to provisioning for its investments in its former crown jewel, the Fort Bonifacio Global City.

"It depends on how we are able to deploy assets to sustain debt reduction," he said, when asked how much in profits MPC would likely generate by year's end.

While MPC's remaining subsidiaries were profitable, Lim said dividends from these were not enough to cover interest payments.

He said the strategy would be to continue the debt-reduction program as well as focus on unlocking values from the remaining assets of the company.

After MPC gave up its controlling stake in Bonifacio Land Co., developer of the Fort Bonifacio Global City, it is still left with a significant landbank, including a 10.4-hectare property in the Bonifacio northern central business district as well as 300-ha Costa de Madera property in San Juan, Batangas, which will be developed into another leisure estate.

A joint venture with the Gualberto family, Lim said MPC was keen on bringing in another partner to bankroll the Costa de Madera project. Within the next six months, he said MPC would spend P60-P70 million to jump-start the development of the property's beachfront.

Lim also said MPC would fast-track the development of its remaining 10.4-ha in Fort Bonifacio property to generate cash for future obligations. He said MPC was now in talks with potential investors for the property, which it wants to develop into a mixed-use commercial complex.

"We have a P2-billion restructured loan with Metrobank which will mature in four years but can be rolled over for five years. We are making plans to pay that debt using cash flow from the property," Lim said.

In the first quarter of this year, MPC recorded a consolidated net loss of P59 million, a significant reduction from the loss of P521.3 million incurred a year ago. Gains were realized from debt-reduction exercises and improved performance of shipping subsidiary Negros Navigation Co.

Leisure estate unit Landco Pacific Corp. also sustained its profitability during the period while another remaining subsidiary, upscale condominium Pacific Plaza Tower, reported renewed sales interest.

3 firms face trading suspension

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange has threatened to suspend the stock trading of three listed companies—Wellex Industries Inc., First e-Bank Corp. and Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp.—starting today over their failure to comply with reporting requirements.

The PSE yesterday said the shares of these three companies would be suspended unless they complied with reporting requirements and pay the necessary fines.

The PSE requires all listed companies to submit financial reports on a regular basis. It imposes a basic fine of P50,000 plus P5,000 for every day after the lapse of a grace period for submission of the requirements.

Meanwhile, the PSE yesterday lifted the trading suspension on Wise Holdings Inc., which paid a fine for failing to submit its annual report for 2001.

George Yang bags . . .

From page B1

"A retail development may be allowed but such development shall not exceed the size and capacity of a neighborhood shopping center," the BCDA said in a statement yesterday.

During a bidding held Thursday last week, AGI edged out property giants Ayala Land Inc. and Robinsons Land Corp. as well as industry newcomer JAD Holdings with an offer of nearly P3 billion in current property value.

The BCDA said AGI's entry in the former military camp would complement other developments in the 150-ha Bonifacio Global City, whose controlling stake was recently given up by Metro Pacific Corp. in favor of an Ayala-Campos joint venture.

"Coming at the heels of the takeover of Bonifacio Land Corp. by ALI and the Campos-owned Greenfield Development Corp., this new development is expected to bring in renewed confidence and vigor among property developers in the Bonifacio Global City," the statement added.

The property is a few hundred meters away from ALI's regional shopping center development Market! Market! along the C-5 road and is near the University Park, which hosts the International School Manila, Manila Japanese School and the British School Manila.

AGI had offered a present value of P2.74 billion for the property, inclusive of P942 million in upfront cash payment while the secured cash flow would reach P1.6 billion.

ALI was the next highest bidder with an offer of P1.7 billion in present value and P300 million in committed investments while RLC tendered P1.4 billion and P460 million in committed investments. JAD offered P1.1 billion and P236 million, respectively.

Stocks . . .

From page B1

selling since the cellular phone company is highly profitable.

Philippine Seven was also actively traded, ending up 30 centavos, or 12 percent, at P2.80, after the company said it narrowed its net loss to P6 million in the five months to May from a loss of P45 million a year earlier.

Strong revenue collection figures by the Bureau of Customs during the six months to June helped provide investors an excuse to accumulate select issues, Astro del Castillo, director of the Association of Securities Analysts of the Philippines, told Dow Jones Newswires.

"The last-minute positive news may have given investors some incentive to continue accumulating select issues," he said.

Del Castillo said yesterday's rate-setting Monetary Board meeting of the central bank isn't expected to yield any major developments or changes in monetary policy.

INTEREST RATES

July 02, 2003-MART1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 2-Jul-03	MART1 1-Jul-03
1 Month	6.5696	6.5286
3 Months	6.9404	6.8327
6 Months	7.5673	7.5542
1 Year	7.9283	7.8817
2 Years	8.7633	8.7867
3 Years	9.7867	9.8067
4 Years	10.1867	10.22
5 Years	10.3883	10.4967
7 Years	11.3117	11.3167
10 Years	11.5183	11.6667
20 Years	12.0417	12.0833
25 Years	12.4267	12.445

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 2, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	18.75	19.25	18.75	19.25	144,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	45.5	46.5	45.5	46	433,800
China Banking Corp.	735	750	730	730	6,350
Citystate Savings Bank	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	31.5	32	31.5	32	79,300
First E-Bank Corp.	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.5	150,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	29.5	30	29.5	29.5	89,300
Philippine National Bank	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	1,600
Phil. Savings Bank	28	28	28	28	80,000
Security Bank Corp.	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	5,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	18.5	18.5	18.5	18.5	3,400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.36	1.36	24,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1465	1465	1465	1465	1,010
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1070	1070	1070	1070	210
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	19	19	18.75	18.75	10,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.69	0.7	5,900,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	615	620	615	620	121,640
Ipeople Inc.	0.83	0.83	0.8	0.8	150,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.044	0.044	0.044	0.044	2,000,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.025	0.026	0.024	0.024	10,600,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3	3	3	3	9,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.41	4,520,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	560	565	555	560	38,420
Philweb Corporation	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	17,100,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	9.8	10	9.8	9.8	523,000
Manila Electric Co. B	14.5	14.75	14.5	14.75	986,100
Petron Corp.	2.02	2.02	2	2	2,191,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	40,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.75	206,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	100,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	2	2	2	2	50,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	250,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.56	1.58	1.56	1.58	43,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.85	0.87	0.85	0.87	350,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.85	2.85	2.85	2.85	2,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	31	31	31	31	42,100
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17.5	17.75	17.5	17.75	269,400
RFM Corp.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	20,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.235	0.25	0.235	0.24	200,000
San Miguel Corp. A	54	54.5	53.5	54	84,100
San Miguel Corp. B	63	63.5	63	63.5	75,900
Universal Robina Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	48,393,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	120,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.37	0.4	0.37	0.4	130,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	20,000
Ayala Corp.	4.5	4.65	4.5	4.6	10,044,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.34	2.38	2.34	2.38	2,315,000
APC Group, Inc.	0.07	0.0725	0.07	0.0725	600,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	6,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.62	1.68	1.62	1.68	18,000
ATN Holdings Inc. B	1.62	1.7	1.62	1.7	23,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	180,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.57	0.58	0.54	0.55	11,750,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.19	0.195	0.19	0.195	640,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.235	0.24	0.235	0.24	610,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.08	1.2	1.08	1.2	14,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	100,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	12.25	12.5	12.25	12.25	530,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	1,250,000
Ionics Inc.	0.79	0.79	0.79	0.79	10,000
J.G Summit Holdings Inc.	1.66	1.76	1.66	1.74	1,651,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	100,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.72	0.74	0.72	0.74	410,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.33	24,360,000
Music Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	6,310,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	1,000
Roxas Holdings Inc	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Hldgs B	1	1	1	1	40,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.6	1.62	1.6	1.62	24,000
Philippine Seven Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	14,682,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	15.75	15.75	15.75	15.75	98,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.53	0.56	0.53	0.56	11,880,000
Mondragon Intl Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.29	0.25	0.29	110,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.44	0.47	0.42	0.43	2,210,000
Philippine Racing Club	4	4	4	4	5,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	19.5	19.5	19.5	19.5	30,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10	10	10	10	3,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10	10	10	10	1,000
Philweb Corp. - Warrants	0.002	0.002	0.002	0.002	3,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6	6.1	6	6.1	8,272,000
Cityland Development Corp	2	2	2	2	548,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.21	0.215	0.21	0.215	300,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.19	0.2	2,270,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.245	0.26	0.245	0.245	30,860,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.02	1.02	1	1.02	2,030,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.14	2.14	2.14	2.14	100,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.16	0.165	0.15	0.155	1,530,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.205	1,170,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	46,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6	6.1	6	6	974,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	1,000,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	340,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	33,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	5,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	150,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	22,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	20,000,000
Pacifica	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	8,000,000

DISCLOSURES

JOLLIVILLE Holdings Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 23, 3 p.m. at the company's conference room, 21/F of Taipan Place Condominium, Pasig City. Only stockholders of record as of June 30 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ELECTED directors of Abacus Consolidated Resources and Holdings Inc. were Manuel de Leon, Clarita Zarraga, Leonardo Gayao, Calixto Laureano, Rodrigo Reyes, Ricardo Leong, Jose Romero Jr., Jose Fernando Camus, Martha Horrigan, Senen Dela Costa and Danilo Venida.

* * *

ELECTED directors of Philippine Seven Corp. were Vicente Paterno, Yeong-Hsiang Yeh, Jorge Araneta, Diana Aguilar, Chung-Jen Hsu, Chien-Nan Hsieh, Fu-Tang Chen, Jui-Tang Chen, Kuo-Hsuan Wu, Manuel Agustines and Alfredo Ramos.

* * *

SOLID Group Inc. disclosed that its wholly owned subsidiary, Solid Distributors Inc., has stopped marketing and distribution operations for the Aiwa brand but the nationwide after service support will continue to be undertaken by another SGI subsidiary, Solid Electronics Corp.

* * *

MAGNUM Holdings Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Aug. 15, 3 p.m. at the company's principal office at Unit 3C Cypress Gardens Condominium, Legaspi Village, Makati City. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

July 2, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.864379	1.000000	53.414000
Japan	Yen	0.007237	0.008373	0.447200
United Kingdom	Pound	1.437289	1.662800	88.816800
Hongkong	Dollar	0.110840	0.128231	6.849300
Switzerland	Franc	0.644001	0.745045	39.795800
Canada	Dollar	0.638719	0.738934	39.469400
Singapore	Dollar	0.492103	0.569314	30.409300
Australia	Dollar	0.584592	0.676315	36.124700
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.292843	2.652590	141.685400
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.230507	0.266674	14.244100
Brunei	Dollar	0.490706	0.567698	30.323000
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000105	0.000122	0.006500
Thailand	Baht	0.020625	0.023861	1.274500
UAE	Dirham	0.235359	0.272287	14.543900
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.156900	61.794700
Argentina	Peso	0.308707	0.357143	19.076400
Brazil	Real	0.303824	0.351494	18.774700
Denmark	Kroner	0.134534	0.155642	8.313500
India	Rupee	0.018633	0.021556	1.151400
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.227498	0.263193	14.058200
Mexico	New Peso	0.082811	0.095804	5.117300
New Zealand	Dollar	0.514052	0.594707	31.765700
Norway	Kroner	0.121075	0.140072	7.481800
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014994	0.017346	0.926500
South Africa	Rand	0.115868	0.134048	7.160000
Korea	Won	0.000726	0.000840	0.044900
Sweden	Kroner	0.108573	0.125608	6.709200
Syria	Pound	0.020581	0.023810	1.271800
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025069	0.029002	1.549100
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000542	0.000627	0.033500

BIR dismisses 20 employees for graft, corrupt practices

By Michelle V. Remo

PARAYNO

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue has dismissed 20 of its employees from service after the tax agency found them guilty of graft and corrupt practices, Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno announced yesterday.

In a statement, Parayno said the employees committed grave misconduct and dishonesty, and added that their dismissal had been recommended for confirmation to the Department of Finance. The employees may file an appeal with the DOF, which has the authority to review, and to confirm or overturn the BIR decision, said a BIR official.

According to the BIR official, the common cases of the dismissed employees were unremitted collection, the amount of which ranged from a low of thousands of pesos to a high of P8 million. The violations were mostly committed by BIR personnel assigned in the provinces where there were no accredited agent banks to collect taxes for the BIR, and where taxpayers hand their taxes directly to the BIR employees, the official said.

She said that aside from administrative charges, the dismissed employees might face criminal charges upon filing by respective BIR district officers. "It's up to the district officers to decide whether or not to file criminal charges against the employees, but normally, the BIR goes after criminal liabilities of erring employees to recover the lost revenue due to corruption," the source said.

Aside from the 20 employees, the BIR has also suspended 12 other employees for misconduct and neglect of duty. The BIR official said common cases of the 12 employees were tampering with receipts, violation of office rules and frequent unauthorized absences. The 12 were meted with a minimum of four-month to a maximum of one-year suspension.

The BIR said the dismissal and suspension of the 32 employees were made under its Personnel Integrity Program, which was drawn up to investigate suspected erring revenue personnel and to promote integrity in the bureau. "The BIR management is committed to weed out the bureau of misfits. We will go after them and file appropriate charges in courts," Parayno said.

END-JUNE

Forex reserves seen at $16B

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE COUNTRY'S foreign exchange reserves remained at a healthy $16 billion in June but would likely slide to the $15-billion level this month due to a number of maturing obligations, according to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

The gross international reserves, a closely-watched indicator of the country's ability to settle short-term external obligations, stood at $16.072 billion in May.

Financial markets have been speculating on the true level of the dollar reserves as some sources said the level had dropped to $15.5 billion.

A strong GIR helps strengthen the peso as it tells the market that the central bank has sufficient dollars to stave-off demand in the spot market during crunch time.

A healthy level of foreign exchange also assures the country's trading partners that it could pay debts and importation, thus an important factor in boosting confidence of foreign investors and creditors.

Comprised mainly of US dollars, the GIR is the total foreign currency holdings of the central bank including gold and special drawing rights, the currency used by the International Monetary Fund.

Buenaventura said the dollar reserves should remain between $14 billion and $15 billion this year. While substantially higher than its level during the Asian crisis, the Philippines' reserves are modest compared to about $40 billion of Thailand and $200 billion of Japan.

A crucial issue in determining the extent of dollar reserves this year would be the government's foreign borrowing program.

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ROBINSONS GALLERIA Basement 635-5061

CESAR V. Purisima, president and chair of the SGV Foundation, Erlinda Echanis, dean of the UP School of Business Management, Trade Secretary Mar Roxas and RCBC chair Cesar Virata at yesterday's launch of the search for this year's Entrepreneur of the Year at the Makati Shangrila Hotel.
ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

2 Japan groups vie for $68.5-M power project

By Ronnel W. Domingo

TWO Japanese groups are vying for the contract to undertake the $68.5-million Leyte-Cebu interconnection project, the National Transmission Corp. said yesterday.

Bidding officials said the groups of Nissho Iwai and Fujikura and of Kanematsu and J Power Systems submitted their technical and financial proposals while ABB of Sweden and Perrelli of Italy sent letters of regret.

One official, who declined to be named, said Transco planned to conduct an electronic bidding for the Leyte-Cebu project on July 30.

"This would be the first time that e-bidding would be used to secure a contract for an infrastructure project," he said.

State-firm National Power Corp., from which Transco was spun off, had been using an e-bidding system for its fuel requirements in the last two years.

The project, which was originally planned to have been completed in 2000, aims to link the power-needy Cebu-Panay-Negros grid to the Leyte grid, which has a surplus of electricity.

₱25-B Clark airport proposal submitted to GMA, Neda

THE PROPOSAL for the P25-billion airport project at the Clark Special Economic Zone has been submitted to President Macapagal-Arroyo and the National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) in preparation for the development of the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport (DMIA) in Pampanga as the country's premier international airport.

The proposal, prepared by the Japanese Airport Consultants (JAC), for the airport development was initiated by the present administration of Clark Development Corp. (CDC) since February 2001 upon the instruction of Ms Macapagal.

JAC proposed the use of DMIA as a passenger and cargo airport.

CDC president Emmanuel Angeles said the President instructed the Neda, where the airport development project study was submitted on June 24, to officially forward it to concerned Japanese authorities, particularly the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).

Earlier, Philippine government officials and Japanese consultants made preliminary talks on the finalization of a loan agreement between the two governments for the DMIA development project which is expected to be signed in Japan in March next year, according to Angeles.

The CDC board of directors submitted the 2,500-hectare airport development project proposal to the Neda and the Central Luzon Regional Development Council for JBIC funding approval.

CDC authorities also submitted last June 26 to the President the DMIA master plan and feasibility study. Angeles said the DMIA development was a top priority project of Ms Macapagal, who wanted it completed before the end of her term in 2004.

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- Headboard Padding
- Floor Polishers
- Venitian Blinds
- Microwave Ovens
- HP Scanners w/ Cable & Adaptor
- Motorola Parabolic Antenna
- Exhaust Monitor
- Telephone Sets
- UPS
- Exerciser
- Table Napkins
- Printer Stands
- Monitor Stands
- Laboratory Table

ELECTRONIC ITEMS
- Aiwa CD Carry Components
- Philips Portable Radios
- Sansui Classic Tuner
- Pioneer Laser Disc Player
- Fan Coil Units
- Grand VCD Units
- Running Signage
- Assorted Signages

TOOLS
- EZI Lock
- Siemens Car Kits
- Water Pump
- Assorted Cables
- 3/4 HP Water Pump(Brand New)
- Crossman Socket Wrench Sets
- Battery Chargers
- Makita Power Tools
- Water Pump Motors

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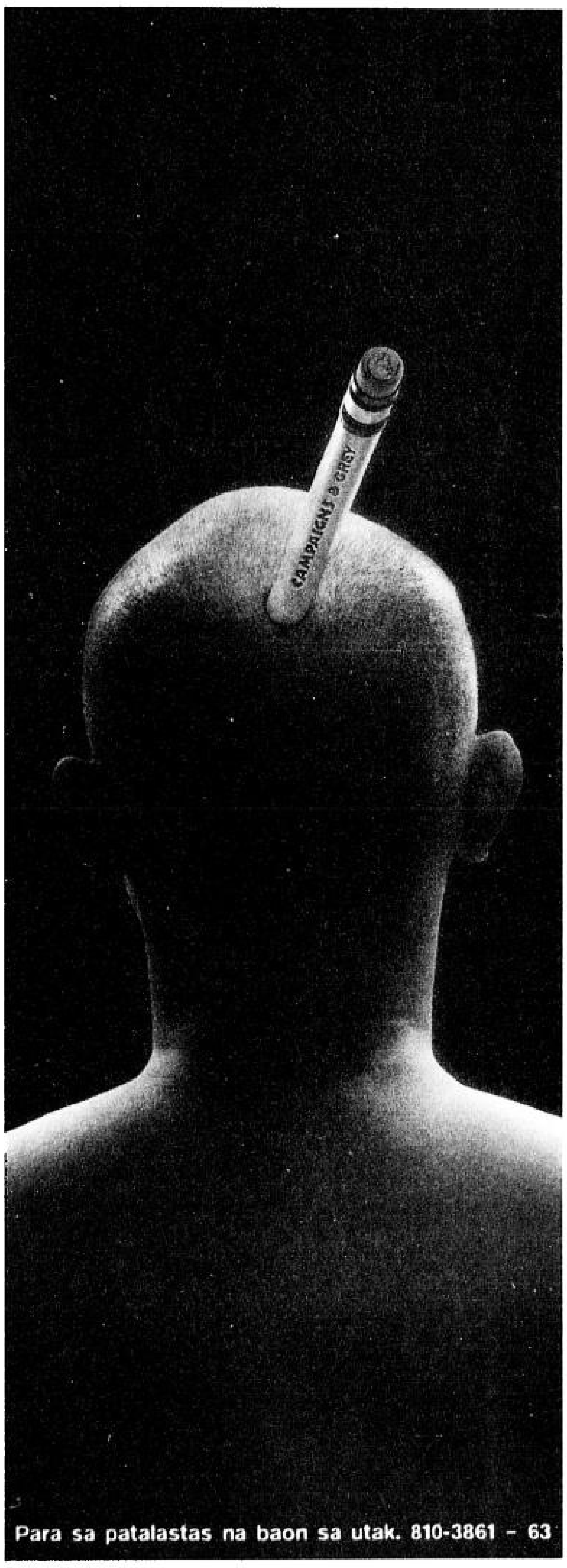

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Asean wants to join international energy charter

LANGKAWI, Malaysia—Southeast Asian countries on Tuesday proposed joining an international energy charter to speed up the development of a sprawling $7-billion gas pipeline linking the region's resources.

Halim Shafie, secretary general of Malaysia's Ministry of Energy, Communications and Multimedia, said the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) would seek observer status at the Brussels-based Energy Charter.

"The Energy Charter provides the legal framework for the interconnection of cross-border facilities like gas or power grid networks," Halim told a news conference after a meeting of senior Asean energy officials in Langkawi, off Malaysia's west coast.

"We can learn from the experience in Europe on how to interconnect power grids and gas pipelines across countries."

The Energy Charter aims to promote energy interdependence on the basis of trust between nations and sets out guidelines and standards to facilitate market development, especially between governments.

Asean countries, which group Cambodia, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Vietnam, Indonesia, Laos, the Philippines and Myanmar, signed a memorandum of understanding a year ago for a 4,500-kilometer gas pipeline linking the region's gas resources with demand centers.

The countries want to alleviate heavy dependence on imported crude oil and find alternatives against possible supply threats.

The agreement last July came six years after the Trans-Asean Gas Pipeline was first proposed and has faced industry criticism for being more politically driven than based on sound economic and commercial plans.

But the line has begun to take shape with spurs linking Indonesia's West Natuna to Singapore and Malaysia, and another line running from South Sumatra to Singapore due to be ready in the fourth quarter 2003.

Myanmar already exports gas to Thailand and construction is under way for a gas link between Thailand and Malaysia.

Guillermo Balce, executive director of the Jakarta-based Asean Center for Energy (ACE), said alliance to the Energy Charter might spur investment in the Trans-Asean pipeline and speed up development of infrastructure.

But he warned that national interests and domestic policies may get in the way. "It will not be easy to adopt this kind of treaty," Balce said. *Reuters*

GROWTH FORECAST FOR GERMANY DOUBTED AFP

German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder (right) speaks with European Union Economic and Monetary Affairs Commissioner Pedro Solbes (center) as German Finance Minister Hans Eichel (left) looks on during a meeting in Berlin on July 1, 2003. Eichel cast doubt over the government's growth forecast for Germany this year and 2004, as a leading institute said the German economy, Europe's biggest, was in crisis.

Thai corporate debt yields seen widening

BANGKOK—Thai corporate debt yields are likely to widen against government debt in the next week as a record number of firms rush to take advantage of historically low interest rates, dealers said.

However, the expanding spread could be pulled back in by a round of interest rate cuts by banks following the central bank's surprise cut in its benchmark rate to 1.25 percent last week.

"Spreads are expected to widen a bit this week, with more supply hitting the market in the next few months," said a bond dealer at a foreign bank.

"It offers a good buying opportunity because commercial banks are expected to cut interest rates again and send spreads back down to where they were before." Thai firms have issued about 65 billion baht ($1.55 billion) in local debt so far this year, compared with 99 billion baht in all of 2002.

Analysts expect issuance in all of 2003 to be 10-15 percent greater than in 2002.

"Despite recent interest rate cuts, bank lending rates compared to issuing debt are still more expensive, bonds are a cheaper and easier way for companies to borrow money, and investors get better returns from bonds than from bank deposits," said Saichon Fuvivattanakankun, an analyst at the Thai Bond Dealing Center, a secondary market for Thai bonds.

Demand for higher-yielding corporate bonds kept corporate yields steady even as government debt yields fell following the central bank rate cut.

The supply of more corporate debt is likely to push the yield spread wider still, although a round of interest rate cuts by banks could eventually reverse the trend.

Thai banks, lumbered with an estimated 600 billion baht in excess liquidity at a time of sluggish loan growth, are eager to widen profit margins and have cut their interest rates twice already this year. *Reuters*

New crop of 'supervalue' wines invading market

BERKELEY, California—California wine cellars are getting in touch with their inner bargain basements as a new crop of "supervalue" wines try to capitalize on the trend for dirt-cheap drink.

Charles Shaw, aka Two-buck Chuck, is king of the cut-rates, but a number of other labels are squeezing under the $2 price tag in California, the result of an oversupply of grapes and new technology that makes making good wine easier.

The idea, makers of the supervalues hope, is to offer champagne tastes on a beer budget.

"One of the things we've had problems with is too many cork-sniffers telling consumers that they've got to drink pinot noir out of a special glass and cabernet out of a Bordeaux glass," says Jeff O'Neill, CEO of Golden State Vintners, which makes the $1.99 Pacific Peak.

They can taste these wines, drink them out of whatever glass they feel like drinking them out of and enjoy it with their meal."

The wines, also known as extreme value wines and available out-of-state for slightly more, are being quaffed with enthusiasm, says wine analyst Jon Fredrickson. Demand for the cheap wines—especially Charles Shaw—helped boost California table wine shipments for the first four months of the year to 48.2 million cases, a 3.5-percent increase, he said.

"No question, people are buying and drinking more wine because they like bargains," Fredrickson said.

Charles Shaw, $1.99, is produced by Ceres, California-based Bronco Wine Co. Bronco has a second supervalue, Sea Ridge, sold for between $1.99 and $2.99 in grocery stores. Pacific Peak is sold at Beverages & More.

Consumers may be enjoying the new value vinos, but supervalues are giving mainstream brands quite a headache, Fredrickson said. Particularly hard hit are the $5 to $10 wines already fighting off the challenge of hot Australian brands.

AU
ALSACE
BORDEA
LOIR

ERICA Valentine, vice president of Vineyard Outlet, looks over the inventory of French wines at her store in Napa, California. AP

Meanwhile, sales of French wine were slumping by some measures, although it was hard to say how much of that is due to the calls for a boycott that sprang up after France opposed the war in Iraq.

According to data from ACNielsen, which tracks sales at large retailers, sales totals for French wine were down 10 percent for the year ending June 7. The data spiked around the time of the war, dropping 26 percent for the four weeks ending April 12 and 19 percent for the four weeks ending May 10.

Bucking the trend were the 2000 Bordeaux, heralded as one of the best vintages ever, which were selling at a brisk rate. Experts also point out that retail store data don't give the full picture on French wine sales since some states don't allow sales of wine in grocery stores and French wine enthusiasts are likely to buy from wine shops.

Erica Valentine, who recently opened a discount wine shop, Vineyard Outlet in Napa, sees the drama of the wine market play out in her store, which sells wines from all over and has a big display of French wines.

"I'd say two out of 10 people come in and they're in a snit about France and they go right away from France," she said. The other eight couldn't care less.

"We have some really great-priced Bordeaux of the 2000 vintage and they're flying out of here," she said.

Valentine doesn't carry the supervalues; she finds her customers tend to be mostly interested in the $10 to $15 price range. But she applauds the concept as using up the glut and introducing wine to a new group of consumers.

Opinions vary on whether the supervalue wines are here to stay or will last only as long as the surplus grapes—or until the novelty wears off.

O'Neill believes prices will rise some more, but noted that winemaking technology has improved to the point where winemakers will still be able to produce a decent wine at low prices.

"We don't believe it's going to be a flash in the pan," he said. *AP*

Wal-mart drafts anti-discrimination policy

NEW YORK—Wal-Mart Stores Inc. has broadened its corporate policy prohibiting discrimination to cover gay and lesbian workers, the New York Times reported on Wednesday.

Pride Foundation, a Seattle gay rights group, disclosed that it received a letter last week from Wal-Mart outlining the new anti-discrimination policies, the newspaper said.

Officials at Wal-Mart, the world's biggest company by revenue, confirmed the change to the New York Times. A spokeswoman told the paper Wal-Mart was sending out a letter on Tuesday to its 3,500 stores, after which store managers would explain the change to more than 1 million employees.

Along with prodding from investors such as Pride Foundation, the spokeswoman said several gay employees wrote senior managements about six weeks ago to say they would "continue to feel excluded" unless Wal-Mart changed its policies, the newspaper said.

A company spokeswoman could not immediately be reached for further comment.

Gay rights groups have made significant headway in recent weeks, particularly as a result of the US Supreme Court's decision to strike down a Texas sodomy law.

Wal-Mart has raised eyebrows and attracted praise from various groups in recent months. The retailer decided to stop selling certain men's magazines it believed were too explicit, and it does not sell compact discs with labels that warn of explicit lyrics.

Wal-Mart rolled out check-out aisle magazine racks last month that block out views of racy magazine headlines it feels are too provocative. *Reuters*

AOL selling stake in China TV venture

HONG KONG—AOL Time Warner will on Wednesday sell a controlling stake in its China TV unit to Asia's richest tycoon, Li Ka-shing, as the US media titan focuses on its domestic market and cutting debt, sources close to the companies said.

Analysts have valued the business—China Entertainment Television (CETV)—at about US$70 million, with AOL holding an 80 percent stake. AOL was expected to announce the sale of more than half of that stake to Li's media company tom.com Ltd. later on Wednesday.

AOL's decision to sell its controlling stake in CETV marks a major pullback from China by the media giant, which held out big hopes for the market when it won the right to broadcast in the province of Guangdong. It was seen as a beachhead for an expansion to reach China's estimated one billion-plus viewers.

If AOL keeps a stake in the venture, however, it would have a powerful ally in the world's most populous media market.

The partnership would be one in a new generation of alliances forming between western media companies eager to tap the China market and well-connected local partners.

Tom.com confirmed it was in the final stage of talks to buy a stake in CETV, but did not elaborate. The firm invited media to a Wednesday event to announce its "latest business development." A spokeswoman from AOL's Turner Broadcasting, which manages CETV, declined to comment.

Sources close to both companies said the sale would involve a controlling stake in CETV, which broadcasts in affluent Guangdong province and to upscale hotels throughout China.

CETV is bleeding red ink and has managed to capture just 2 percent or less of the market in the southern city of Guangzhou after a year and a half of operations, analysts say.

The Chinese-language Hong Kong Economic Times said the station is expected to be valued at less than HK$600 million (US$77 million), the approximate valuation of Hong Kong's No. 2 free to air broadcaster ATV, based on a transaction in May.

ATV also recently won the right to broadcast in Guangdong.

Tom.com, a former Internet start-up that has evolved into a diversified media company focusing on greater China, tried unsuccessfully last year to buy a 33-percent stake in ATV.

Tom.com shares were up 4.26 percent at HK$2.45 midway through the trading day in Hong Kong, compared with a 0.13-percent rise in the broader Hang Seng Index.

AOL has been trying to pay off its US$26 billion in debt and shore up its core media assets in the United States. In May, the company sold its 50-percent interest in US cable network Comedy Central to Viacom Inc. for US$1.225 billion in cash.

Earlier this year another AOL China initiative—a US$200-million Internet service provider venture with top Chinese computer maker Legend Group Ltd.—was put on hold in the face of growing competition. *Reuters*

HIGHER S&P CASH INDEX AFP

Clerks signal prices for futures contracts in the Standard and Poors stock index futures pit at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange on Tuesday in Chicago, Illinois. The S&P cash index jumped more than 7.82 points to 982.32.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

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INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION

For Contract No. ADB/OAS-2003/048

1. The Asian Development Bank (ADB), a multilateral development finance institution headquartered in Manila, Philippines, invites interested parties to apply for pre-qualification in the bidding of ADB's Facade Restoration and Water Proofing Services, ADB West Core Segment A – Office Tower.

2. The Contractor shall build, install and supply the materials, tools, equipment, labor and supervision for the restoration and water proofing of the ADB Facade, West Core, Segment A – Office Tower located at the ADB Headquarters Building, 6 ADB Avenue, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila in accordance with the policies, standards and procedures established by ADB. The project consist of but not limited to the following: stripping existing sealant, wood nailers, wood sleepers, marine plywood backing; removal of pavers and insulations; change waterproofing and repair of damaged membrane waterproofing; lightweight concreting works installation of aluminum grating and other related works.

3. This invitation is open to firms and voluntary formed joint ventures from ADB member countries who meet the minimum requirements specified in the pre-qualification documents including among others:

   a. Have an independent legal existence as a validly registered company, or a joint venture partnership (under joint and several liability) for at least 5 years or more with a trade specialization, experience and capabilities for stripping existing sealant, wood nailers, wood sleepers, marine plywood backing; removal of pavers and insulations; change waterproofing and repair of damaged membrane waterproofing, lightweight concreting works, installation of aluminum grating and other related works.
   b. Have a valid Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) License, Class A, for the current year;
   c. Have a sound financial and credit position over the past 3 years (Average annual revenues of at least PhP5 million over the past 3 years from general construction or similar services, credit line facility of at least P500,000.00 from its depository bank or its suppliers; with a sound financial position).
   d. The Project Manager should be a Civil Engineer with at least 5 years of experience for this type of service or similar service. The Foreman/Site supervisor should have at least 5 years experience in general construction and similar services.
   e. Have at least three (3) current and previous major construction projects or corporate accounts with similar scope of services.

4. Pre-qualification documents may be obtained from the Head Contracts Section, General Services Division, Office of Administrative Services (OAS), Room 4221N at the above address, from 7 to 9 July 2003 on any working day (8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

5. This invitation does not entail any commitment on the part of the ADB, either financial or otherwise. Any cost of preparation for pre-qualification shall be borne solely by the applicant. The ADB reserves the right to accept or reject any application for pre-qualification.

(Sgd.) NORMIN S. PAKPAHAN
Director, General Services Division
Office of Administrative Services

(PDI – July 3 & 4, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
TONDO MEDICAL CENTER
Balut, Tondo, Manila

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Tondo Medical Center Bids and Awards Committee (TMC-PBAC) invites all Qualified accredited DOH Suppliers and Bidders to Pre-qualify and to Bid for Drugs/Medicines, Medical Surgical Supplies, Dental, X-ray and laboratory supplies/reagent for Tondo Medical Center.

Only Reputable, Credible and Pre-Qualified Bidders/Supplier are eligible to participate in the bidding.

Interested supplier may obtain the necessary PRE-QUALIFICATION STATEMENT at the Supply Office of Tondo Medical Center c/o Ms. Lolita Oliquiano upon submission of letter of intent. Bring original copies of Firms License for authentication.

For the list of Drugs/Medicine, Medical/Surgical Supplies, Dental, X-ray and Laboratory reagent. Please contact the supply office of Tondo Medical Center, Balut, Tondo, Manila.

SCHEDULE OF PRE-QUALIFICATION AND BIDDING

	DRUGS/MEDICINE	MEDICAL, SURGICAL SUPPLIES, LAB / X-RAY SUPPLIES
Publication	July 1-3, 2003	July 1-3, 2003
Issuance of Pre-qualification forms	July 4-11, 2003	July 4-11, 2003
Deadline for submission of Pre-qualification forms	July 21, 2003 – 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	July 21, 2003 – 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Posting of Pre-Qualified Bidders/Supplier	July 24, 2003	July 24, 2003
Submission of samples for evaluation	July 25; 28-31, 2003	July 25; 28-31, 2003
Evaluation of Samples	Aug. 1; 4-8, 2003	Aug. 1; 4-8, 2003
Issuance of Bid Documents	Aug. 11-13, 2003	Aug. 11-13, 2003
Pre-Bid Conference	Aug. 19, 2003 – 9:00-12:00 n.n.	Aug. 21, 2003 – 9:00-12:00 p.m.
Submission of Bids	Aug. 26, 2003 – 8:00-10:00 a.m.	Aug. 28, 2003 – 8:00-10:00 a.m.
Opening of Bids	Aug. 26, 2003 – 10:30 a.m.	Aug. 28, 2003 – 10:30 a.m.

Bid Documents shall be issued to pre-qualified bidders/suppliers upon payment of non-refundable fees of P500.00 pesos at the Cashiers Office – TMC.

Venue for the Bidding Conference, Submission and Opening of bids shall be at the TMC Conference Room.

Tondo Medical Center reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality and awards the contract to any bidders whose offer is considered most advantageous to TMC and or to the government. The TMC-PBAC assume no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders to any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) DR. VICTOR J. DELA CRUZ, M.D. CESO IV
Medical Center Chief II

(PDI - July 1, 2 & 3, 2003)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of extrajudicial settlement of the estate of the late AMADO DE LEON among his heirs as per Doc#14 Page#3 Bk#1 series of 2003 of notary public Josephine Bagaoisan of Pasig City PDI 7/3,10,17, 2003

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that Urbancorp Realty Developers Inc. Cert. #7932 & #20928 in the name of Rosario M. Dinglasan was lost. If no contest received new cert. will be issued (PDI-June 26, July 3, 10, 2003)

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ERRATUM

In the ad of the **Department of Transportation and Communications, Bids and Awards Committee** for Locally Funded Projects Re: Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid, published in this newspaper June 24 and July 1, 2003, Project No. 4 should be **Cauayan Airport, Isabela** instead of Cauayan Airport, Nueva Viscaya.

Our Apologies

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
NATIONAL CAPITAL JUDICIAL REGION
REGIONAL TRIAL COURT
BRANCH 50-MANILA

PROPMECH CORPORATION,
Plaintiff,

- versus - CIVIL CASE NO. 01-102051

VIVA SHIPPING LINES
COMPANY, INC., DOMINGO M.
REYES and RAMON REYES,
Defendants.
x- x

SHERIFF'S NOTICE OF SALE

WHEREAS, by virtue of a Writ of Execution issued in the above-entitled case by the HON. WILLIAM SIMON P. PERALTA, Presiding Judge, Regional Trial Court of Manila, Branch 50, on March 20, 2003, for the recovery of the following: (a) Four Million Two Hundred Ninety Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Eleven Pesos and 100/19 (PhP. 4,299,911.19) representing the purchase price of the engines under the Sales Contract No. 97-1166, inclusive of the eighteen percent (18%) per annum interest as damages as provided for in the Sales Contract; (b) Four Hundred Ninety Eight Thousand Five Hundred Forty Three Pesos and One Centavo (PhP. 498,543.01) representing the remaining balance under Sales Contract No. 99-1287 inclusive of Twenty Four (24%) per annum as interest and penalties; (c) Eight Million One Hundred Twelve Thousand Nine Hundred Six Pesos and Eighty Two Centavos (PhP. 8,112,906.82) representing the total amount due from the purchase of various machine and engine parts, inclusive of Twenty Four percent (24%) interest as stipulated in the sales invoices; (d) Amount equivalent to Twenty Five (25%) percent of the total amount due and payable as payment of attorney's fees and costs of collection as provided for in the contract of Sales; (e) Amount of Nine Hundred Eighty Six Thousand Four Hundred Thirty Nine Pesos and Twenty Two Centavos (PhP.986,439.22) representing the amount of the unpaid balance under Sales Contract Nos. 99-1285 and 99-1302; and (f) the costs of suit and all expenses incurred in the implementation of the said writ, etc., LEVY was made on November 8, 2001 by the undersigned Sheriff upon all the rights, interest, title and participation which the defendants VIVA SHIPPING LINES COMPANY, INC., DOMINGO M. REYES and RAMON REYES may have in the following real properties together with all improvements thereon, which are more particularly described as follows:

TRANSFER CERTIFICATE OF TITLE
NO. T-45901

A parcel of land (Lot 228-B-4 of the Subdivision plan (LRC) Psd-68834 being a portion of Lot 2228-B, (LRC) Cad. Rec. No. 213), situated in the Barrio of Cotta, City of Lucena, Island of Luzon, Bounded on the N1., points 2 to 5 by Lot 2244, Lucena Cadastre; on the SE., points 5 to 6 by Lot 2228-B-1; on the S., points 6 to 1 by Lot 2228-B-2; and on the W., points 1 to 2 by Lot 2228-B-3, all of the subdivision plan, beginning at a point marked "1" on plan being S. 78 deg. 08'E., 162.95 m. from B. B. B. M.5, City of Lucena; thence N. 3 deg. 05'wo point 23; thence S. 76 deg. 46' E., 5.40 m. to point 3; thence S. 81 deg. 42,78 m. to point 4; thence N. 86 deg. Oo' E., 58.46 m. to point 5; thence S. 37 deg. 26" W., 26.66 m. to point 6; thence S. 86 deg.55' W., 70.71 m. to the point of beginning; containing an area of One Thousand Six Hundred Forty Six (1,646), Square Meters, more or less.

And
TRANSFER CERTIFICATE OF TITLE
NO. T-45941

A parcel of land (Lot 3 of the consolidation and subdivision plan, Pcs-04-002003, being a portion of the consolidation of Lots 2228-B-2 and 2228-B-3 (LRC) Psd-68834, L.R.C. Record No.), situated in the Barrio of Cotta, City of Lucena. Bounded on the SE., & S., along line 5-6 by Lot 2; along lines 6-7-8-9-10 by Lot 1; along line 10-11 by Lot 5; along line 11-12 by Lot 4 all of the consolidation and subdivision plan; on the N, along line 12-13 by Lot 2244 Cad-112, Lucena Cadastre; on the E., & N., along lines 13-14-1 by Lot 2228-B-4 (LRC) Psd-68834. Beginning at point marked 1 on plan, S. 82 deg., 38' E., 231.90 m. from B. L. B. M. No. 5, cad-112 Lucena Cadastre; thence 37 deg. 27' W., 11.05 m. thence N 3 deg. 09' W., 8.94 m. to 6; thence N. 3 deg. 09' W., 11.26 m. to point 7; thence S. 85 deg. 43' W., 4.01 m. to point 8; thence N. 2 deg. 55' W., 6.00 m. to point 11; thence N. 2 deg. 55' W., 62.00 m. to point 12; thence S. 76 deg. 46'E., 12.30 m. to point 13; thence S. 3 deg. 05' E., 25.88 m. to point 14; thence N. 86 deg. 55' E. 70.61 m. to the point of beginning containing an area of Three Thousand Six Hundred Twenty Four (3,624) square meters. All points referred to are indicated on the plan and are marked on the ground as follows: points 1,2,3,4, & 13-14 by old P.S. and the rest are P.S. cyl. Conc. mons. 15 x 60 cm; bearing true; date of original survey, July 1916-Dec. 1917, and that of the consolidation and subdivision survey, December 29, 1984, and was approved on January 14, 1985.

x-x-x-x-x-x-x-x-x-x-x-x-x-

NOW THEREFORE, by virtue of said Writ of Execution and in accordance with the provision of Rule 68, Section 3, in relation to Rule 39, Section 18 of the New Rules of Court in the Philippines the undersigned Sheriff of the Regional Trial Court of Manila, Branch 50, hereby announced that at exactly 10:00 o'clock in the morning but not later than 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon of the 24th day of July, 2003 at the main entrance of Manila City Hall, facing Philippine Normal University (near the flagpole) the real properties described above will be sold at public auction for CASH and in PHILIPPINE CURRENCY to the highest bidder therefore to satisfy the judgment plus other necessary legal expenses.

Copies of this Sheriff's Notice of Sale will be published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, a newspaper edited and of general circulation in the City of Manila and Lucena City once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks.

This Sheriff's Notice of Sale will be posted in three (3) public conspicuous places in the City of Manila/and Lucena City for the General Information of all who may be concerned.

Prospective buyers or bidders are hereby enjoined to investigate for themselves the title to the real properties above, and the encumbrances thereon, if any there be.

Manila, Philippines, June 23, 2003.

(Sgd.) ENRIQUITO A. VIOLETA
Sheriff IV
RTC-Manila Branch 50

WARNING

It is absolutely prohibited to remove deface or destroy this sheriff's Notice of Sale on or before the date of sale, UNDER PENALTY OF LAW.

Copy Furnished:

ATTY. JOSE ANTONIO V. EVANGELISTA
Counsel for the Plaintiff
Sycip Salazar Hernandez and Gatmaitan
4th Floor, Sycip Law All Asia Building
105 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City

ATTY. JOSE AMOR M. AMORADO
Counsel for the defendants
3rd Floor, Prudential Life Building
P. Canlapan Street, Batangas City

PROPMECH CORPORATION
Marine Technology Center
Aduana cor. Arzobispo Sts.,
Intramuros, Manila

VIVA SHIPPING LINES COMPANY, INC.
DOMINGO M. REYES and RAMON REYES
Lucena City

(PDI – July 3 & 10, 2003)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY SCREENING AND TO BID

Date: June 11, 2003
Contract No.: Sp01.BSETL.Lw-0314

1. Contract No.: Sp01-BSETL.Lw-0314 Supply and Delivery of Suspension Insulator Assemblies and Accessories for the Bauang - San Esteban 230 kV Line 2 Stringing Project
2. The contract to be performed by the successful bidder shall consist of furnishing and delivering complete the suspension insulator assemblies and accessories to TRANSCO's designated stockyard.
3. The Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid is US$ 536,745.00 plus Php 7,298,459.00 from Internal Cash Generation.
4. Application for Eligibility is open to Filipino firms and contractors who have the legal, technical and financial requisites of the contract to be bid.
5. Application for Eligibility shall be evaluated using "PASS/FAIL" criteria and only Eligible Bidders shall be invited by Transco in the bidding. All bids equal to or lower than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be evaluated based on the responsiveness of the contractor's offer to the contract under bidding subject to Postqualification before an award is made. Bid Prices submitted higher than the Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid shall be rejected and returned outright.
6. Bidding Documents and Eligibility Documents will be available for issuance on June 20, 2003 at the Bids and Contracts Management Department, Second Floor, Building No. 2, Power Center, Agham Road corner Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City 1104, Telefax No.: 921-2308 upon presentation of Letter of Intent, Contractor's License and a payment of non-refundable fee of P8,000.00 per copy.
7. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished Application for Eligibility, Forms, documents and statements shall be on or before July 21, 2003 and shall be submitted at the registration office and address mentioned above. If the date is a non-working day or declared non-working day, the deadline for submission shall be moved to the next working day immediately following said date. Late submission and/or incomplete application shall not be accepted.
8. Contractor, not yet included in the Tranco's List of Registered Contractors, who wishes to participate in the public bidding, in order to facilitate eligibility check/screening, are requested to register with the registration office mentioned above by submitting the following basic requirements, duly notarized, which should be maintained current and updated at least once a year. A Certificate of Registration will be issued to contractors upon approval.
    - Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) business name registration or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registration certificate, as appropriate;
    - Mayor's permit and/or municipal license for the current year;
    - Taxpayer's Identification Number;
    - Notarized statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation, including, in the case of procurement of civil works, non-inclusion in the "blacklist" of contractors issued by the CIAP;
    - Audited financial statement, stamped "received" by the BIR or its duly accredited and authorized institutions, for the immediately preceding calendar year, showing, among others, the prospective bidder's total and current assets and liabilities inclusive of Income Tax Return and Receipt;
    - Contractor's License
9. TRANSCO reserves the right to reject any Application for Eligibility or all bids without offering any reasons, waive any required formality therein, and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
10. Additional information shall be furnished upon request. All communications should be addressed to the undersigned at the aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) **WINIFREDO SM. PANGILINAN**
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee &
Vice President, Eng'g Design and Construction

(PDI - July 1, 3 & 5, 2003)

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION

Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID FOR SURPLUS PIPES, I-BEAM, JUNK HEAVY EQUIPMENT, WASTE OIL AND OTHER UNSERVICEABLE ITEMS "AS-IS, WHERE-IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING: July 16, 2003, 2:00 p.m., Solarium Multi-Functional Room, NPC Head Diliman, Quezon City.

The National Power Corporation will conduct public bidding for the sale of the following junk and unserviceable items:

	ITEM DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION	MINIMUM BID PRICE
1	One (1) lot of pipes and i-beams, various length and sizes surplus materials located at Bataan Combined Cycle Power Plant and Bataan Thermal Power Plant, Limay, Bataan (BTPP)	P 1,040,110.00 per lot
2.	One (1) lot junk heavy equipment and AUV consisting of Grove Crane, Terex loader, forklift and AUV Pick-Up located at BTPP	P 137,000.00 per lot
3.	One (1) lot of junk aircons 47 units, welding machine 5 units, batteries various type 146 located at BTPP	P 34,070.00 per lot
4.	Waste of fuel 296 drums, high viscocity located at BTPP	P 14,800.00 per lot

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. FIVE PER CENT (5%) PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S CHECK.
2. LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN OF THE BIDDER OR FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE COMPANY (2002, original or certified true copy of BIR).
3. DENR PERMIT TO OPERATE WASTE TREATMENT FACILITIES AND PERMIT TO OPERATE AIR POLLUTION SOURCE AND CONTROL INSTALLATIONS (for item no. 4 bidders only).

All interested parties who wish to secure bid forms must present a valid Tax Identification Card or Income Tax Return.

Interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid form at P500.00/set from Mr. S.V. Lomuntad, Jr. at Bldg. 1 Ground Floor, NPC Head Office, corner Agham Road and Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or call tel. no. 924-5384. Deadline for issuance of bid form is 4:30 p.m. July 15, 2003.

For the Materials Management Department

(Sgd.) **FELIX B. TACATA, JR.**
OIC, MMD

(PDI - July 2, 3 & 4, 2003)

Trans Co
NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION
South Luzon Operation & Maintenance

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
AD NO. TRANSCO 2003-08A

The Southern Luzon Transco (SLT), Transco wishes to invite interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid on the items listed below:

SCHEDULE		ITEM DESCRIPTION	PR NUMBER
DATE OF BIDDING: AUGUST 01, 2003; 2:00 P.M.			
A1	1 SET	THERMAL SCANNER	3PSMDS-03-035

NOTE: A Pre-Bidding Conference will be held on July 17, 2003, 10:00 AM at SLT Bidding Room.

Complete sets of Application Form for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be obtained from the Office of the Manager, Administration Division, SLT, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P100.00 per schedule starting July 04, 2003. No bid documents will be issued on the date of bidding.

Bids will be received at the SLT Bidding Room, Transco-SL, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna until 2:00 o'clock P.M. on the date specified above after which Eligibility Requirements and Initial Technical Proposals of eligible bidders will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

Prospective Bidders shall signify conformance to bidding terms and conditions as required and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. The procurement rules and regulations used in this transaction shall be in accordance with the implementing rules and regulations of "Executive Order 40".

The Bidder shall furnish as part of his bid, a bid security in the amount equivalent to at least 1% of the approved budget in the form of Cash, Manager's/Cashier's Check, Certified Check, Bank Draft, Irrevocable Letter of Credit, or 1.5% of the approved budget in the form of Bank Guarantee, or 2.5% of the approved budget in the form of Surety Bond, penal and callable on demand issued by a Surety or Insurance Company accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commission.

The Corporation reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligations to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

(Sgd.) R.D. RAMAS
CHAIRMAN-BAC
TRANSCO SOUTH

(PDI – July 3, 2003)

LIGHT
RAIL
TRANSIT
AUTHORITY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the:

CONTRACT FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE LRT LINE 1 SYSTEM

Approved Budget for the Contract from Corporate Funds:
PhP 410,400,000.00
Contract Duration: Two (2) Years

Bid Documents can be obtained from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat at the Ground Floor, Administration Building, LRTA Compound, Aurora Boulevard, Pasay City, Metro Manila during regular office hours on **July 2-4, 2003** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **FIFTEEN THOUSAND (P15,000.00) PESOS**. Interested Bidders which have purchased the Bid Documents in March 2003 are exempted from said payment.

Site inspection will be held in the morning of **July 8, 2003**. For purposes of clarifying issues, a pre-bid conference shall be held on **July 8, 2003** at 2:00 p.m. at the above address. Deadline for the submission of documents for eligibility/prequalification shall be on **July 16, 2003** at 2:00 p.m. The BAC Secretariat shall receive sealed bids from eligible/prequalified Bidders not later than 2:00 p.m., **August 1, 2003** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

The determination of eligibility shall be based on the non-discretionary "Pass-Fail" criteria concerning requirements on experience, personnel capability, financial capacity, as well as formality and completeness of submitted documents.

LRTA reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, without assuming any obligation whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the Bidder may incur in the preparation of its bid, and will entertain only such bid established to be most advantageous to the LRTA.

(Sgd.) EVANGELINE M. RAZON
Chairman, Special Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – June 25 & July 3, 2003)

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OBITUARIES

PNOC Energy Development Corporation

deeply mourns the loss of its former

Public Relations Manager

Windsor Ortiz Refuerzo

who peacefully joined his Creator on July 1, 2003.

His remains lie in state at Kamuning First United Methodist Church, in Kamuning Road (near EDSA), Quezon City until Friday night. Interment will be on Saturday, July 5, 2003 at Natividad, Pangasinan.

We extend our condolences to his family and loved ones and enjoin the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

DEATH NOTICES

WILFREDO M. AREOLA

Died on June 30, 2003
at the age of 79.

His remains lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be announced later.

DR. MANUEL C. TRINIDAD

Died on June 29, 2003 at the age of 81.

His body lies in state at Veronica Memorial Chapels - 517 A. Arnaiz Ave., Pasay City.

Interment on Sunday, July 6, 2003 at Pasay Municipal Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at Sta. Clara Parish Church.

VILMA GOOD-SALAZAR

Died June 30, 2003 at the age of 46.

Her remains lie in state at Cosmopolitan Memorial Chapel, Davao City.

Interment tomorrow, July 4, 2003 at 2:00 p.m. at Davao Memorial Park, Matina, Davao City.,

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OBITUARIES

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Metro Manila, 1632
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(632) 845-2341 or (632) 845-2342
sales@heritagepark.com.ph

Beata Gabito Dorotan

August 10, 1915 – July 1, 2003

Loving, caring and hardworking mother to **Jelly** and **Dionga**, **Roque** and **Pansang**, **Ente** (†) and **Daisy**, **Amy** and **Oner**, **Nelia** and **Pet**, **Baby** and **Jerry**, **Boy** (†) and **Ebic** (†), **Romy** and **Amy**, **Danny**, **Emma** and **Manny**, **Mamie**, **Eddie** and **Oyen**, **Ping** and **Evelyn**, **Anson** and **Cita**, **Atan** and **Edwin**, **Dioklan**, **Pocyan**.

Her remains lie in state at the Sta. Maria de la Strada Chapel, Katipunan Road, Quezon City. Mass at 8:00 p.m., Thursday, July 3, 2003. She will be brought to Irosin, Sorsogon on Friday, July 4, 2003 and will be laid to rest at the Irosin Catholic Cemetery on Monday, July 7, 2003 after a Mass at 9:30 a.m. at the St Michael the Archangel Church.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the scholarship program for the poor will be greatly appreciated.

Filemon Flores Bernarte

of Masantol, Pampanga

Peacefully joined his Creator
on June 23, 2003 at the age of 83.

His loving wife **Simforosa**; children **Verly** & **Toti**, **Meg** & **Boy**, **Per** & **Connie**, **Betty**, **Miles** & **Baby**, **Aida** & **Carina**; grandchildren, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at his residence in Masantol, Pampanga.

Interment will be on Sunday, July 6, 2003 at the Masantol Cemetery after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Masantol Parish Church.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

- ❶ Copy of Death Certificate
- ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT

MESSAGE OF THANKS

DEATH ANNIVERSARY

REQUIEMS

FREE OBIT DESIGN

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and
bank-to-bank payments

PATRICIA SALISI MOLINYAWE

March 13, 1913 – July 1, 2003

Peacefully joined her Creator
on July 1, 2003 at the age of 90.

Her loving husband **Florentino B. Molinyawe** (†); children **Cora & Fred Sysantos**, **Oscar & Maritess**; grandchildren **Williejay & Aileen**, **Denis & Vina**, **Tata**, **Chris**, **Pam**, **Raymond & Guisie**, **Anna** and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at St. Jerome Emiliana Parish Church, Zapote, Alabang.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 5, 2003 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque, after the 8:30 a.m. Mass.

FELIPE dela Fuente REYES, JR.

of Puerto Princesa, Rivas, Balanga City;
No. 4 Getsemani St., Jordan Heights Subdivision,
Novaliches, Quezon City
and Brgy. D.L. Maglanoc, Caranglan, Nueva Ecija

Died in the Grace of the Lord on June 27, 2003 at 1:20 a.m.

He is survived by his wife ATTY. EVELYN S. MAGLANOC REYES and his only son PATRICK NICOLAS M. REYES; brothers Arturo and Alfred; sisters Glorie, Wena, Carmelita & Emily; sisters-in-law Dr. Annerie S. Maglanoc, Ellen; brothers-in-law Engr. Ike and Romero.

His remains lie in state at Maglanoc Residence at Brgy. D.L. Maglanoc, Caranglan, Nueva Ecija. Interment will be on July 6 (Sunday) at 10:00 a.m. at Caranglan Cemetery, Caranglan, Nueva Ecija.

ELENA (HELEN) D. VILLARROEL

(Wife of the late **Lutgardo "Luding" Villarroel**)
Died peacefully on June 30, 2003 at the age of 79.

She is survived by her son **Jesse**; daughters **Myrna Esguerra**, **Milagros Cruz**, & **Dulce Villarroel**. They request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Del Pilar Chapel, La Funeraria Paz, Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park) Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Saturday, July 5, 2003 after the 9:30 a.m. Mass at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

We design **OBITUARIES** for free.

✝

DIONISIO J. RIVERA, M.D.

Urologist and Professor
University of Santo Tomas

Passed away in the Grace of Our Lord
on Wednesday, July 2, 2003 at the age of 92.

His bereaved wife, **Josefa Cu Unjieng Rivera**; daughter **Marivic**, son-in-law **Ramon del Rosario, Jr.**, grandchildren **Nikki** and **Al Serafica**, **Denise** and **Louie Jison**, **Danielle** and **Dominique del Rosario**, brother **Gines** and sister-in-law **Carmencita**, sisters-in-law **Leonor Andrews** and **Caridad Papa**, brother-in-law **Benito Cu Unjieng** and his other relatives and friends request readers, especially the generations of students from the UST College of Medicine who had benefited from his teaching and guidance, to kindly say a prayer for the repose of his soul.

His remains will lie at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Shrine, Doña Juana Rodriguez Blvd., (Broadway), New Manila, Quezon City. A funeral mass will be celebrated on Saturday, July 5, 2003 at 10:00 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations to **CRIBS Philippines** will be appreciated.

SIBS Publishing House, Inc.
honors the memory of the country's foremost publisher . . .

SIBS
PUBLISHING HOUSE, INC.

Jesus Ernesto R. Sibal

(July 3, 1943–October 3, 2000)

On his 60th birthday, we salute this pillar of the textbook publishing industry for his exemplary dedication to the production of quality textbooks and other instructional materials. He believed in the capacity of the Filipino educators to write textbooks that will make a difference in and improve the quality of the lives of our schoolchildren.

The family, staff, and friends of Mr. Sibal enjoin every one to offer prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

Eucharistic celebrations for
Mr. Jesus Ernesto R. Sibal's birth anniversary
will be held at the following churches:

1. **Cebu Metropolitan Cathedral Parish** Cebu City	5:30 A.M.
2. **Our Lady of Lourdes Parish** V and G Subdivision, Tacloban City	5:30 A.M.
3. **Nuestra Sra. Virgen dela Regla Parish** Lapulapu City	5:30 A.M.
4. **National Shrine of St. Joseph Parish** Mandaue City	5:30 A.M.
5. **Our Lady of Lourdes Parish** Punta Princesa, Cebu City	5:30 A.M.
6. **St. Paul of the Apostle Church** Timog Avenue corner Mo. Ignacia Streets, QC	6:00 A.M.
7. **Christ the King Church** Green Meadows Avenue, QC	6:00 A.M.
8. **San Sebastian Church** C. M. Recto Avenue, Manila	6:00 A.M.
9. **Espiritu Santo Parochial Church** Tayuman, Manila	6:00 A.M.
10. **Malate Catholic Church** Malate, Manila	6:00 A.M.
11. **San Isidro Parochial Church** Taft Avenue, Pasay	6:00 A.M.
12. **Pasig Catholic Church** Pasig City	6:00 A.M.
13. **St. Francis Church** Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City	6:00 A.M.
14. **Paco Catholic Church** Paco, Manila	6:00 A.M.
15. **Redemptorist Church** Bacolod City	6:00 A.M.
16. **Sacred Heart Parish** Calinan, Davao City	6:00 A.M.
17. **Redemptorist Church** Cebu City	6:00 A.M.
18. **Basilica del Sto. Niño** Cebu City	6:00 A.M.
19. **Sto. Niño Parish Church** Tacloban City	6:15 A.M.
20. **Our Lady of EDSA** Ortigas Avenue corner EDSA, QC	6:30 A.M.
21. **Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church** 13th Avenue, Cubao, QC	6:30 A.M.
22. **Immaculate Conception Chapel** Xavier University, Cagayan de Oro City	6:30 A.M.
23. **Sto. Rosario Parish** Cebu City	6:30 A.M.
24. **SIBS Publishing House, Inc.** Quezon Avenue, QC	11:00 A.M.
25. **San Agustin Metropolitan Cathedral** Cagayan de Oro City	12:00 N.N.
26. **Immaculate Conception Church** Lantana Street, Cubao, QC	6:00 P.M.
27. **Sacred Heart Church** Scout Ybardolaza, Kamuning, QC	6:00 P.M.

ALL DIGITAL SOUND

AYALA CINEMAS

PRESENTS

G1 GLORIETTA 1
CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL TDHROTTLE
2 HULK
MGA MUNTING TINIG (SMALL VOICES)
CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL TDHROTTLE

G4 GLORIETTA 4
CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL THROTTLE
2 THE HUNTED
THX GUARANTEED SEATS CHARLIE'S ANGELS 12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:40
4 DUMB AND DUMBERER
5 PIGLET'S BIG MOVIE
6 CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL THROTTLE
7 28 DAYS LATER

GB1 GREENBELT 1
Artfilm CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL THROTTLE 11:30, 1:50, 4:10, 6:30, 9:00
2 DANCER IN THE DARK 11:30, 2:10, 4:45, 7:30
Onstage NANETTE I. W/ GARY V. July 3 - 9pm
RICO J. PUNO July 8 - 9:00 pm

GB3 GREENBELT 3
THX GUARANTEED SEATS CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL THROTTLE 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30, 10:50
THX GUARANTEED SEATS CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL THROTTLE 12:55, 3:15, 5:35, 10:15
GUARANTEED SEATS PUNCH DRUNK LOVE 12:30, 2:30, 4:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30
4 GUARANTEED SEATS THE HUNTED 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 8:40, 9:50
GUARANTEED SEATS CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL THROTTLE 2:05, 4:25, 9:05, 11:25

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
THX CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL THROTTLE
CHARLIE'S ANGELS FULL THROTTLE
3 THE HUNTED
4 PIGLET'S BIG MOVIE
MGA MUNTING TINIG (SMALL VOICES)

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2

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2 MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM
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4 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
5 HULK
6 THE HUNTED
7 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
8 28 DAYS LATER
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10 ANG TANGING INA
11 TUMITIBOK, KUMIKIROT
12 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2

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1 THE HUNTED
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5 28 DAYS LATER
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8 MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM
9 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
10 DANCER IN THE DARK
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5 DUMB & DUMBERER
6 28 DAYS LATER
7 MGA MUNTING TINIG
8 PIGLET'S BIG MOVIE
9 ANG TANGING INA
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11 MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM
12 DANCER IN THE DARK

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7 28 DAYS LATER
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8 THE HUNTED
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7 HULK
8 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2

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1 BIGAY HILIG
2 CLOSED
3 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
4 OPERATION BALIKATAN
5 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
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7 CLOSED
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2 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2
3 THE HUNTED
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5 ADAPTATION
6 HULK

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2 HULK
3 DUMB & DUMBERER
4 MGA BABAE SA VIP ROOM

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3 HULK
4 WILLARD
5 THE HUNTED
6 CHARLIE'S ANGELS 2

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3 DUMB & DUMBERER
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7 HULK
8 SMALL VOICES

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MOTORING

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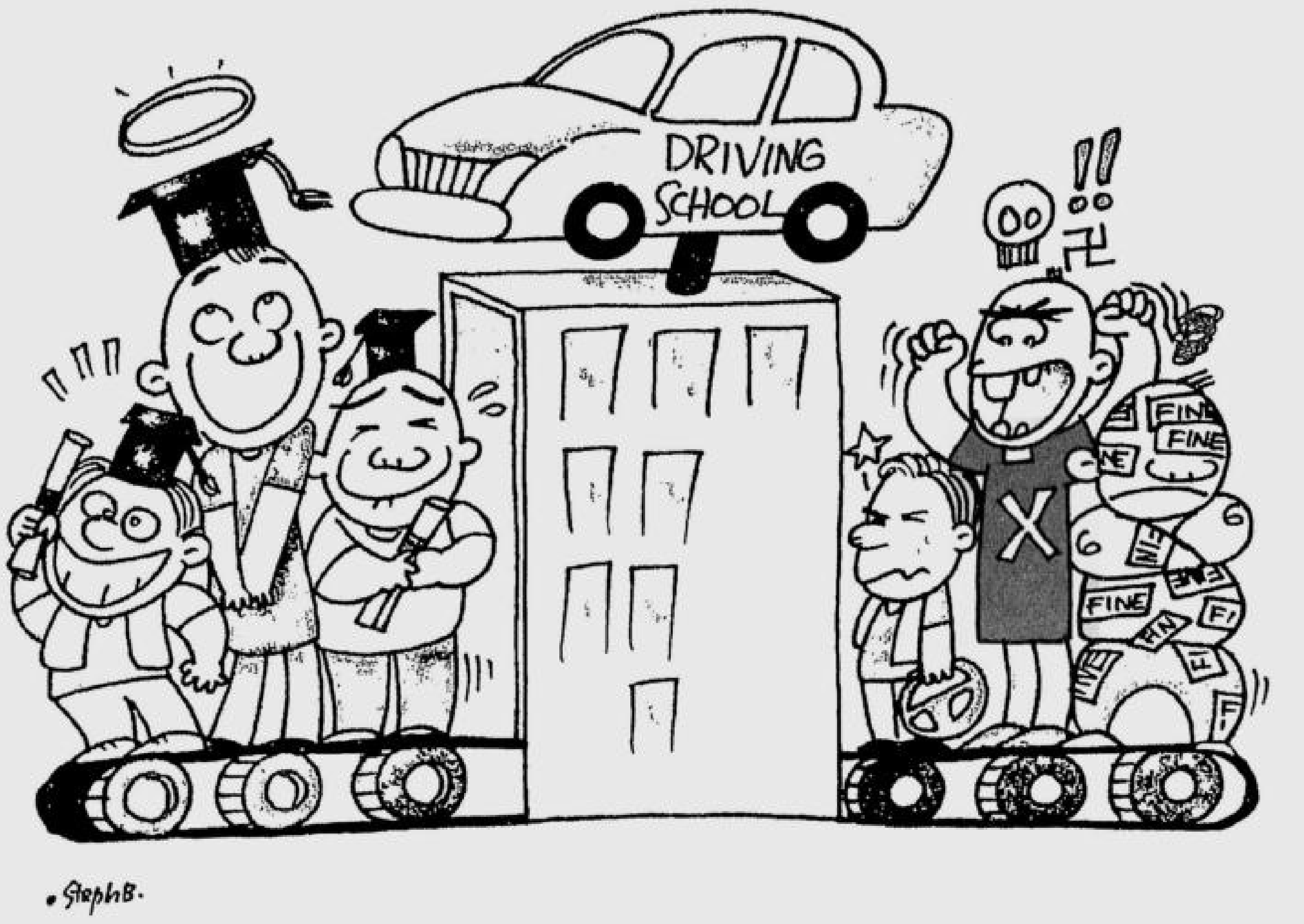
Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

College degree for drivers, anyone?

By Tessa R. Salazar



DIGNIFY the driver's profession: open up the opportunity for drivers to get a college degree.

Traffic safety education chief Daisy Jacobo of the Land Transportation Office says a college degree can help uplift the status of drivers in the country, especially professional drivers.

Ladderized curriculum

Jacobo, who conducts seminars for apprehended drivers and conferences for improvement of driving skills for company drivers, adds that a ladderized curriculum for interested drivers can make them earn a baccalaureate degree in as short as two years, thus also help raise the standard of the traffic system and safety in the country.

Says Jocobo: "A ladderized curriculum could mean a six-month course, a one-year course or a two-year associate in automotive technology course as entry levels. A four-year course would be for drivers who want to get a degree."

She adds that upgrading drivers' skills to four-year courses could remove prejudice against vocational courses, especially those taking up automotive courses.

Drivers, who are degree holders and plan to apply for related jobs in other countries, have the edge.

"(We should) open up the academic portals to drivers," she says.

As of now, there is no degree course offered for drivers here. Driving schools teach only short courses (usually for five days) on how to maneuver vehicles, a few traffic regulations, and safety driving—just enough to help the student get a license.

Then the responsibility ends there.

A two-year vocational course, such as associate in arts, for drivers could help raise the standard in road safety and conduct.

Public schools and technological institutes can provide night schools for drivers where they can learn basic communications, good values, stress management and accounting, among others. Outreach program such as adult education night schools of private academic institutions can also offer their own courses.

Traffic safety

In traffic safety seminars for apprehended drivers or for company drivers, the LTO teaches traditional values for Filipino drivers, stress management, traffic safety management and the basic principles of highway transport system, among others.

"Our academic preparation should be attuned with the demands of the job market. After all, you prepare students to be self-sufficient, not only in terms of how to think independently but how to earn income independently."

Satellite schools can also be established to make it accessible for drivers in the provinces.

Big companies can also make another career path by sending their employees to academic schools instead of making a one-shot deal program on driving safety, or asking employees to stay for hours in the motorpool.

Cheapest profession

Driving is still the cheapest profession in terms of expenses to get a license. For three years, a driver spends P240 to practice a profession that is regulated.

Of the four million drivers in the country, 40 percent are public utility drivers. There are about seven million vehicles in the country.

Meanwhile, traffic education is already incorporated in textbooks for Grade 4 and 6 students. Vehicular traffic education is now included in the Sibika and Kultura subjects, says DOTC head for planning Arnel Manresa.

Teachers also need to review and reorient themselves in terms of traffic education, he adds.

Rep. Joseph A. Santiago has urged the departments of Transportation and Communications and of Basic Education to push the inclusion of vehicular traffic education into the school curriculum.

Jacobo says, however, that schools cannot do it alone. The parents are also responsible for teaching their children about road safety. The school just reinforces whatever education a child receives at home, she adds.

Says Jacobo: "You will be overburdening the curriculum if all of these would be taught in school. It will compete for attention with reading, writing and arithmetic."

If included in the curriculum for secondary schools, Jacobo says traffic education should be an elective subject. Instead of home economics, it could be traffic education with specific training for actual driving.

NISSAN Exalta TS (Touring Sports)

Nissan makes available sporty Sentra to buyers

TAKING a very bold step in enhancing its sedan lineup, Nissan Motor Phils. Inc. makes available the Sentra Exalta TS (Touring Sports) starting this month.

The TS differs from Nissan's previous sports versions, the Sentra GTS and the Super Touring (ST) because of its comfortable, accented interiors and plush, quiet ride.

Says NMPI Market and Product Planning head Raymond B. Tribdino: "This car is a balancing act. The Sentra Exalta already has a reputation for good power delivery, agile handling and innovative styling. Add to that a heritage for performance and you get the car with the merits of the Touring Sport."

According to him, the car is aimed at a more mature, more intelligent market. "This market appreciates the image value of the sleek, sporty exteriors but isn't willing to sacrifice the laid-back comfort and warmth of the interior and the warmth of the accents in the doors and dashboard," Tribdino clarifies.

The concept of the Touring Sports evolves from both Nissan's motor sports heritage and its experience with the grueling Pan Philippine Marathon.

"From the three Pan Philippine marathons we participated in, we learned how just how comfortable the Sentra Exalta is. We discovered how much drivers and passengers appreciate the full-auto Calsonic air-conditioning, the soft and deep bucket seats and the wonderfully compliant ride that made the tortuous 30-day, 31,000-kilometer trip bearable," Tribdino explains.

"Our years running Sentras at Subic gave us the experience to tune suspensions and get optimum engine power without sacrificing reliability. Putting the experiences from these two events into focus gave birth to the sporty Sentra TS. Those who have known the Nissan brand for sometime will appreciate the rationale of the Touring Sports."

Already orders for the vehicles are piling up, but only 40 of the TS will be assembled, to "add to its exclusivity." The limited edition 5-speed, 1.6-liter sedan sports the 116 ps QG-series engine delivering 14.9 kg-m at 6,000 rpm. Available at all Nissan dealers this month, the Sentra Exalta TS comes in mica stone, raven black, sparkling silver and white.

Civic buyers get the VIP treatment

A WHOLE new exciting treat awaits all Civic buyers, according to Honda Cars Philippines Inc.

In line with the introduction of Honda's newest product offering, the VIP or Value Insurance Program, Civic buyers may get to experience the VIP treatment for free.

From June 18 to July 16, individual or fleet buyers of the Civic may avail of Hondas very own and most comprehensive insurance coverage, for free. Customers are also given the option of a cash rebate if they choose not to avail of the free insurance. What's more, great freebies await buyers at all Honda dealerships nationwide.

The Honda VIP is a premium car insurance coverage that goes well beyond just that. The value-added services offered with the Honda VIP include comprehensive 24-hour roadside assistance, towing assistance, mechanic referral and minor roadside repairs, hotel accommodation assistance, alternative travel assistance and cost, removal of vehicle with the use of a crane, all for free (subject to minimum coverage/reimbursements).

Customers are assured of quality as only Honda's highly skilled service technicians will handle their vehicles and Honda genuine parts will be used for all repairs. Fast approval is also guaranteed for claims of up to P50,000 worth.

All Honda dealerships nationwide now exclusively offer the VIP with two participating insurance companies—BPI/MS Insurance Co. (a joint venture of Bank of the Philippine Islands and Mitsumi Sumitomo Insurance) and Malayan Insurance Co. (a member of the Yuchengco Group of Companies).

Now even more eye-catching, the Civic comes with a sporty styling and class-leading innovative features. Plus, all variants now come with the exclusive "wave key," a difficult-to-copy key for that added safety and security. Still in the heart of the Civic VTi/VTi-S is the revolutionary Honda VTEC Technology.

Balanced power and superior performance with excellent fuel efficiency is made possible with the Civic's 3-stage VTEC (VTEC3) engine. Capable of producing 130 ps of power at 6,600 rpm and a more stable torque output at 2,000-5,000 rpm, the Civic's powerplant offers a spirited driving response while achieving minimum levels of fuel consumption.

The Civic is available in 1.5 LXi MT or AT, 1.6 VTi MT or AT and 1.6 VTi-S MT or AT. New and exciting colors for the Civic are red rock pearl, silverstone metallic and aqua green, in addition to the popular dark emerald green, tafetta white and zircon blue. Exclusive colors include circuit blue for the 1.6 VTi and night hawk black for the VTi-S.

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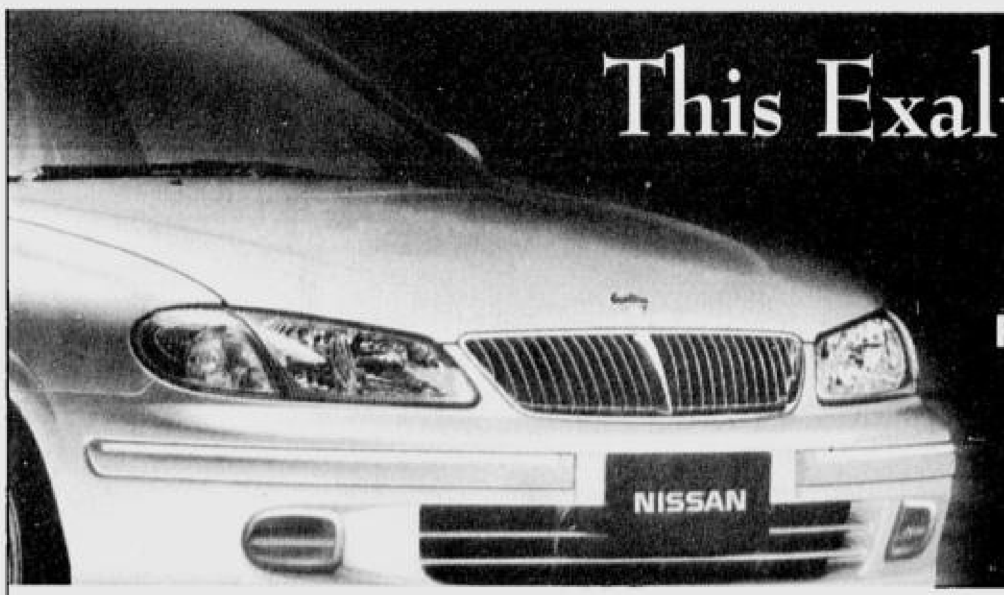

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No 2742, Series of 2003

Toughest bike for the job

Text and photos by Charles E. Buban

A NEW breed of motorcycle built for business

WHEN Kawasaki Motors (Philippines) Corp. conceptualized three years ago a motorcycle that could withstand the country's terrain, road condition and the way Filipino drivers use them for business, the company thought of building a motorcycle based on a design using a two-stroke engine.

But times have changed and with more sectors clamoring for efficient burning four-stroke engine motorcycles, Kawasaki Philippines decided to come up with a model that combines the good qualities of these two types of motorcycle engine.

Said Kawasaki Philippines general manager for marketing Rodel Pablo: "We need power that only a two-stroke engine can provide but it must be fuel efficient like the four-stroke engines. So we ended up with a four-stroke that has a displacement that can rival the power of a two-stroke engine."

The Barako 175 is thus, powered by a 175-cc single cylinder, single overhead camshaft engine which offers optimum power and performance.

The engine is equipped with an advanced compression release system that makes kick-starting easy and convenient plus a Mikuni VM24 carburetor system that delivers precise fuel metering, which contributes to the engine's high fuel efficiency.

Designed for business

According to Pablo, the Kawasaki Barako 175 was designed for business like for tricycle, motorela (transport motorcycle pulling a two-wheeled cab) or *"habal-habal"* (an improvised transport motorcycle with extended seats).

"With the challenging road condition and our driver's unique way of driving, the Barako 175 offers variable power and torque with a wide range of engine revolution per minute but is fuel efficient and highly reliable," he said.

With a 140-mm ground clearance, a stiffened front fork and a bigger tire size (3.00-17), the Barako 175 can easily negotiate rocky terrains and river crossings that are so common in most provincial routes.

Even the motorcycle's seat was thickened and lengthened so riders will have a more comfortable ride.

35th anniversary

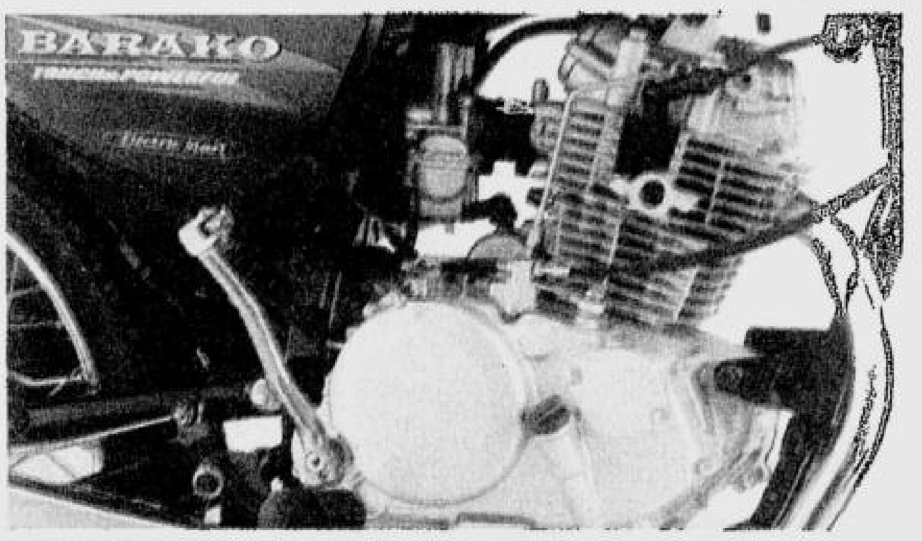
The launch of the Barako 175 coincides with Kawasaki Philippines' 35th anniversary in the country.

Established in June 1968, the brand became famous for its reliable motorcycles—the HD series—that a lot of tricycles use today.

"We want to duplicate and even exceed the success that our HDs have achieved so we made sure the Barako 175 will become the next generation 'beast of burden,'" assured Pablo.

Three prototypes of the Barako 175 were tested for one year in different parts of the country and several drivers were asked on what they want with their motorcycle.

"They want a tougher frame so we conceived a high tensile steel that is durable and adoptable for tricycles and a reliable suspension so we installed four shock absorbers at the rear that has a five-way preload adjustable features to withstand heavy loads," described Pablo.



WITH A POWERFUL and reliable 175-cc engine, the Kawasaki 175 offers greater power and better fuel efficiency. It's also more environment friendly.

ABC (Anything But the Car) policies

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

ARE governments restricting the ownership and use of cars (the ABC or Anything But the Car policy) or have they realized that public transport has a limited role in providing an alternative to the car? At the 42nd conference week of the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) and Alliance Internationale de Tourisme (AIT) in Marseilles, France last week, some 300 delegates representing 50 auto clubs all over the world addressed this question affecting the future of motoring as the AIT & FIA's Traffic Commission focused on the attitude of governments toward car mobility: To the four Automobile Association Philippines (AAP, formerly Philippine Motor Association) directors attending the conference, the ABC policy is nothing new since the Unified Vehicular Volume Reduction Program, more commonly known as "color coding," restricts the use of cars in Metro Manila during weekdays. Across the nation, car ownership is, in a way, restricted by the excise tax and other tariffs imposed on new car buyers, thereby making the purchase of a new car unaffordable for most Filipinos.

Congestion charging

Another example of car use restriction is found in London, where the congestion charging scheme requires motorists entering Central London to pay a flat charge of 5 pounds per day (Monday-Friday, 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.). While the scheme has reduced traffic within Central London by 16 percent and boosted passenger bus and taxi cab patronage, the sales of small merchants and retailers declined, forcing 25 percent to consider relocating their shops outside the zone.

The idea of charging motorists for the privilege of entering the downtown area has long been implemented in Singapore. Moreover, car ownership in Singapore is limited to those who can afford not only the acquisition cost of the vehicle, but also to bid for a renewable license to own and operate a car.

Better access

Despite the ABC argument that public transport can and must substitute for most car travel, the AIT & FIA Traffic Commission reported that many governments now recognize that the car provides better access to jobs and services as well as leisure, tourism and recreational opportunities. ABC policies have been opposed often and have failed as governments realize that the "spaghetti" of journeys most people must take in their daily lives can only be done effectively and practically by car.

As the Traffic Commission phrased it, "Around the world car ownership is growing. Car-owning individuals and families make more journeys because they have a car, and are able to enjoy a much more mobile lifestyle. . . It is the convenience and flexibility the car provides that is its best salesman!"

But global acceptance that car traffic will continue to grow and that public transport use will increase only marginally, is challenged by scenarios for the future. At the Marketing Commission's opening session on the first day of the conference, Liv Kari Tokheim of the Norway Automobile Federation presented three scenarios for the future wherein environmental pressure was expected to increase on personal mobility.

'We' or 'me' scenario

The major uncertainties of the future foreseen by Tokheim are environmental issues. Will society demand stronger environmental regulations from government, or will the view that technology will save the world prevail, making environmental rules unnecessary? Will the focus shift from unrestricted use of private cars to environmentally friendly public solutions for the common good? Certainly, the cost of meeting higher environmental standards will be enormous, Tokheim said, citing as an example the breakthrough in new, environmentally friendly tires that was made possible only because Michelin, Pirelli and Goodyear shared their expertise and funds.

In other words, Tokheim asked, will the "we" scenario win out over the "me" values in the future? In the "we" scenario, car-sharing, public transport, smaller vehicles and cleaner fuel cell or hydrogen vehicles will replace the use of fossil fuel. The "me" values, on the other hand, favor unrestricted car mobility and the improvement of main road networks as well as making rural roads safer for motorists. Perhaps, Tokheim concluded, merging strategies is the answer.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: The man who fell into an upholstery machine is fully recovered.

* * *

(E-mail comments to asevilla@inquirer.com.ph)

---

3 vie for round 6 top driver

GOODYEAR
3
TRS

BORJA

OUT of the 140 drivers who competed for the Top Driver Challenge, seven were left to compete for the Ford Lynx Cup. And out of the seven guys exposed by Ford, Tuason Racing School and C! Magazine to the ordeal of basic and advance class, three were left to vie for the top driver round 6.

Jeffrey Jan Borja, Jonathan Dael and Edgar Geoffrey de Vera will slug it out in the final round. Twenty-four year-old Jeffrey, is a manager at the Speed Cast Lending Investor. He still doesn't have a racing experience.

Jonathan, 27, is a research analyst of Thomson Financial. His racing experience is Karting Speed Fest 2002 at Clark, Pampanga.

Eighteen-year-old Edgar Geoffrey is a student taking up Computer Application. He has no racing experience yet.

The first test is braking exercise, the shortest distance for the car to make a full stop. The second one is downshifting, which is a result of the instructors' evaluation on how the contestants followed instructions.

The third and fourth tests are combinations of all skills learned in five flying laps. The fifth test is a passing exercise, graded if they are following instructions. The sixth test is rated on reaction time.

Other factors included the personality, how the driver followed instructions, the discipline, the screen test and the instructors' evaluation.

Each test has 10 points up for grabs.

Bentley wins Le Mans race

IT has taken 24-hours of slog, not to mention three years of unrelenting hard work but, 73 years after its most recent victory, Bentley has won the Le Mans 24-hour race—and placed second.

Amid scenes of extraordinary emotion in and around the pits, Guy Smith drove his No. 7 Bentley Speed 8 over the line. He was followed by David Brabham in the sister No. 8 car to realize a dream that was a lifetime in the making.

In the process Team Bentley broke Audi's three year stranglehold on this race, delivered maiden Le Mans wins to Dindo Capello and Guy Smith and allowed Tom Kristensen to join Derek Bell and Jacky Ickx as the only people ever to have won this race more than four times.

The great question at the start was whether the proven extra speed of the Speed 8 was enough to counter the extra time it would spend in the pits compared with the Audis. Brilliant driving from all six drivers, flawless pitwork, Michelin tires that allowed triple and quadruple stints and legendary Bentley reliability provided the answer.

Said Dr. Franz-Josef Paefgen, chair and chief executive of Bentley Motors: "This is one of the greatest moments in our company's long history. On behalf of everyone at Crewe and all those who work for Bentley around the world, I'd like to thank every person at Team Bentley who helped make it possible. After 73 years we are delighted to have taken Bentley back to its roots with its 6th victory at Le Mans."

The Bentley high-luxury cars are exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Bentley Philippines located at 2304 Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City.

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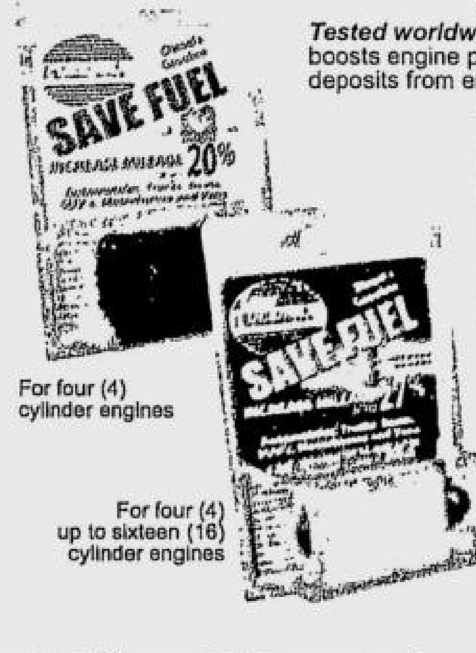

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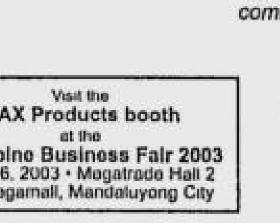

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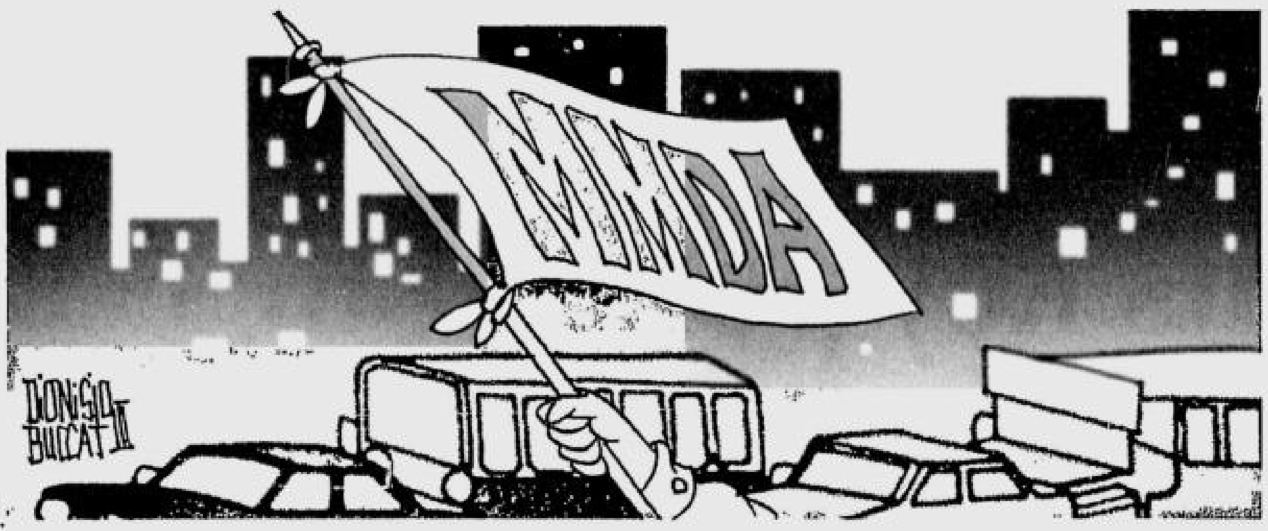

MMDA an aberration; Abalos an inspiration

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

LET me refresh your memories.

The MMDA (Metro Manila Development Authority) was a martial law product. It was established as though it had the function of a province, which it really did. Marcos created it for his wife, Imelda, who was to become MMDA's first head; she was then called MMDA governor. You know, the First Lady must have something to busy herself with. Martial law was a virtual Marcos toy and the late dictator provided for everything that would make every member of his household happy, if not busy. Imee had the *"samahang kabataan"* thing, Bongbong Princeton, Irene the pianos and cultural scenes. For Imelda, the MMDA was her Barbie doll.

At that time, the MMDA was composed of 13 municipalities and four cities (Quezon, Manila, Makati and Pasay).

* * *

Edsa 1 in 1986 killed martial law but not the MMDA. Today, some of the 13 towns have grown into cities, like Marikina, Caloocan, Valenzuela, Antipolo, Pasig, Parañaque and Mandaluyong, to name only a few. But, like the four original cities, they remain under the MMDA.

Mel Mathay replaced Imelda Marcos as MMDA head. Mathay, who would become Quezon City mayor, dropped the tag governor in favor of chairman. After Mathay came Peng Oreta and then Ben Abalos. Today, we have Bayani Fernando. Like Imelda, all are political appointees. Except Oreta, all are politicians in the sense that they used to hold elective positions before they were appointed. Fernando was a former mayor of Marikina when GMA tapped him to replace Abalos (Fernando's wife is now Marikina mayor). Abalos, a former mayor of Mandaluyong, is now Comelec chairman.

* * *

As can be gleaned from its creation, the three main duties of the MMDA are garbage disposal, traffic management and infrastructure/beautification of the metropolis.

In her time, Imelda concerned herself with beautifying every nook and cranny of Metro Manila; she built walls to cover squatter shanties from public view and painted them white. The traffic mess and waste management, her successors would soon try to fix.

Alas, no one among Imelda's successors has achieved a semblance of success insofar as all three MMDA duties were concerned. While Imelda tried to beautify the metropolis, Fernando is at present trying his best to "uglify" the city by de-greening it instead of regreening it (Joyce Kilner must be turning in her grave); in fairness to him, he has done something good (widening some streets and clearing many sidewalks of vendors). Overall, though, he remains a flop like his predecessors.

* * *

If you ask me, the MMDA is an aberration, if not an abomination. Its creation merely duplicates the duties of the cities and municipalities under it. The MMDA head, because he is not elected, serves under the pleasure of the President. Unlike the mayors supposedly under him/her, the MMDA head cannot disobey the appointing power.

While the mayors' boss is the public, the MMDA chair's boss is the President. Notice the way Fernando reacted when his despicable act of killing the trees at Katipunan was questioned: "I have the blessing of the President." Notice that he has never said: "I have the mandate of the people." From the start, he could never invoke people's wishes and sentiment as he seems always blinded by his canine loyalty to the President. Fernando only stopped killing the trees when the President finally listened to the voice of the people and ordered Fernando to stop killing Katipunan.

Such a person of authority like Fernando is as dangerous as Hitler.

* * *

A while back, one mayor stood up to defend his turf: Benhur Abalos of Mandaluyong. That was quite ironic because Benhur is the son of Ben Abalos, the former MMDA chair. I have yet to meet Benhur (the film "Ben Hur" is a personal favorite) and I'll just be glad to shake his hand when the opportunity presents itself.

When Fernando started tearing down some islands in Mandaluyong under the guise of improving traffic in the city, Benhur rose to challenge Fernando's authority. Benhur was so angry he was almost on the verge of accusing Fernando of trespassing; he'd be justified had he done that.

Recently, the 17 mayors of the metropolis met to discuss matters of turf control. I think they will be hailed if they insist on questioning Fernando's Marcosian, if not Hitlerite, moves to make the metropolis under total control of the MMDA.

* * *

Fernando should really know by now that the metropolis isn't Marikina, the town he had beautified with much splendor and glory when he was still the mayor there. I give him credit for that.

Now, if Fernando wishes to follow in the footsteps of Erap, that's another story. You see, Erap thought the Philippines was San Juan, where he was mayor for years. He thought that by being successful with his swaggering ways in San Juan, he'd also be a winner with his movie-*bida* ways once he got to the Palace. He was wrong, of course. There's a whale of a difference between dealing with hometown thugs and dealing with the world's thugs. The thugs in your backyard, you could humor them, buy them gin, and devour them with your small-time wit. Beyond your borders, the thugs are of the devouring kind; they mistake your charisma for karma and chew you like betel nut. Where Erap is now, Fernando must give it a serious thought. It is a place of his own creation: *kangkungan*.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Both expressways, North and South, have become "sloways" that it's best to travel there between 12 midnight and 3 a.m. to escape the irritating bumper-to-bumper situations there during the daytime up to about 9 or 10 p.m. Better yet, as Rob Dix said, stop paying toll when using either one of them. "Why pay for your punishment?" he asked.

Godinez wins 5th leg of Subic race

FRANCIS Godinez, on board a number 67 Black Honda Civic EG car by ADD Research Paint and Chemical Corp./ATI Group Inc./Elf Lubricants, won in Class B for both the morning and afternoon races of the Blaze Super Saloon Series' 5th leg held recently at the Subic International Raceway.

Godinez, already assured of the class B tiara in the series because of a superior points lead, also figured prominently in the overall category, finishing third place behind Super Class A driver Jody Coseteng and Class A driver Louis Ramirez.

What made the race more exciting was the fact that Godinez went head-to-head with Mike Anton, the leader in the Class A drivers' category, due to a serious error Anton committed earlier in the race, and defended his third place position to a near photo finish.

Standing atop the podium with Super Class A driver Coseteng and Class A driver Ramirez, Godinez offered his recent victory to his corporate supporters and team members.

The 6th leg of the Blaze Super Saloon Series, which has a total 7 legs, is slated July 13.

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New 'old gold' runs thin in RP

WHO would have thought that a mundane thing such as replacement parts for jeeps could one day become so valuable? Jeep restoration has become a popular hobby around the world. As a result, the price for restored jeeps has risen so steeply that what was once a common utility vehicle has become a precious collector's item.

Because restored jeeps continue to command high prices, collectors suddenly find themselves with a treasure trove of now expensive World War II mementos. Authentic replacement parts for these antiques are referred to as New Old Stocks (NOS).

Restoration

The Americans left the Philippines with a seemingly inexhaustible supply. But demand has dwindled this treasure trove to a few remaining pieces threatening to bring the restorers' hobby to a grinding halt. To combat this, Asia's leading jeep parts manufacturer has turned its craftsmanship toward preserving the restorative art.

MD Juan, a third generation jeep crafting company, now provides restoration quality parts for World War II and Korean War Era jeeps.

Rommel Juan, vice president for marketing of MD Juan Enterprises Inc. said, "Jeep restoration is a very small, specialized niche market which we do as labor of love more than for the profits."

Since the Philippines is considered as the jeep capital of Asia, MD Juan considers jeep restoration as a labor of love offered to the Filipino people to make jeep restoration more accessible. It was able to create a global niche by being the only source in Southeast Asia of historically accurate, hard-to-find jeeps and jeep replacement parts. It is devoted to producing parts, panels, accessories, as well as complete bodies of virtually all jeep models.

You can't take away Filipinos from jeeps and you can't take the jeep from Filipinos. The new generation is discovering the satisfaction of jeep restoration and how it can do wonders as a business venture and even as a hobby.

Fascination with antiques

Filipinos have a strong fascination with anything antique, an attitude we can attribute to how strongly we connect with our past. The avid Filipino collector doesn't keep his old antique pieces locked away in a cabinet. Instead, he takes great efforts in restoring them to their original brilliance.

Simply because nothing can best remind the Filipino of his rich past than a precious memorabilia, especially if this relic was instrumental in shaping the events of history.

Today, jeepneys roam the streets of Metro Manila. They are the means of transportation for almost every Filipino. But more than offering a practical means of getting from one point to another, jeepneys embody the history of the Philippines in the 21st century. They also stand as a testament to Filipino mechanical genius.

The public utility jeepneys we have come to love as a national icon are modifications of US military vehicles. The original jeep was the father of the four-wheel-drive vehicle.

Ford, Willys-Overdrive and Bantam were commissioned to produce jeeps for the coming war. Although a lot of observers found its design to be ugly, performance-wise, they were astonished when the capacity of the jeep was demonstrated to them. Who would have imagined that a vehicle can be driven through rough dirt terrain or snow, can endure harsh weather and effectively transport goods, weapons and men.

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What is the difference between a stock air filter and a modified air filter?
—Alvin S. Villanueva of La Paz, Tarlac

AS WE all know, the air filter stops contaminants from getting sucked into your car's engine. The stock air filter uses a fine screen of paper to stop dirt, debris and other small particles from getting inside your engine and doing damage. The openings in this type of filter have to be very small to filter efficiently, thus also somewhat restricting the flow of air. If properly maintained, however, your stock air filter will do a good job of stopping the dirt while still allowing an efficient flow of air volume to the engine.

However, when the engine is modified for high output, the amount of air intake needed increases as well. The stock air box simply will not allow enough air to flow in to supply a well-tuned high-output engine. For these cars and for those people who simply would want to coax more horsepower out of their stock car, they can do so by replacing the standard restrictive air filter with a modified one. These improve performance and fuel efficiency by trapping more dirt and allowing better air flow. These are generally made of foam or cotton and are completely reusable. You buy the filter once and every time it's dirty, you simply clean it and refit it. This makes it easier for you to maintain a clean filter no matter how rough and dirty the streets may be where you travel.

But don't expect to "feel" a great increase in horsepower from just an air-filter modification. You may expect a car that sounds a bit louder at high rpms, and it could rev up and down a little faster. You could also have a little more pickup coming out of turns and your car should breathe easier.

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Bangko Sentral cuts key policy rates

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas unexpectedly cut its policy rates by 25 basis points yesterday bringing its overnight borrowing and lending rates to their lowest levels since May 1992 at 6.75 percent and 9 percent, respectively.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the Monetary Board of the BSP, at its meeting yesterday, had decided to cut the rates, the first adjustment on the policy rates since March 2002, to spur economic growth and discourage banks from parking their funds with the central bank's vault.

The Monetary Board, however, kept the BSP's reserve requirement at its current level of 17 percent.

"It's positive for the peso bond market in the long run because it is a stronger signal that it (BSP) wants to lower interest rates," a debt market trader said.

However, market traders said the cut might impact on the peso today. The peso may weaken to about 53.50-53.60 to $1 after closing at 53.41 to $1 yesterday, they said.

In a statement, Buenaventura said "the move comes at a time when interest rates are considerably more stable than they were more than a decade earlier."

Traders said that with the domestic interest rates at very low levels, the banks would hardly be encouraged to lend and might prefer placing their funds in the spot market where margins were higher.

The central bank chief, however, said banks must start lending more aggressively to the private sector and not only to the government.

While lending had started growing since September last year after months of contraction, the growth rate remained insufficient to spur a stronger improvement in the economy.

Buenaventura said that a favorable inflation outlook gave monetary authorities the flexibility to cut rates.

"The move will reduce intermediation cost with banks and that's better than a one-point cut in reserves. It (Monetary Board) did not change the reserve requirement because it believes that there's enough liquidity in the system," he said.

He admitted that the decision of the US Federal Reserve last week to cut its rates by 25 basis points gave the Monetary Board the flexibility.

Buenaventura said the peso should remain stable and must not be affected badly by the rates cut.

"The peso should stay at current levels. We will let market forces determine the foreign exchange level," he added.

A trader pointed out that the only thing the BSP had achieved in yesterday's decision was to push the banks' money out of their vaults.

In the meantime, Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said he was expecting the economy to grow by 4.5 percent year-on-year in the second half of the year as the country rides on the coattails of an anticipated global recovery. *With a report from Reuters*

Prices of oil products seen rising by 15c/liter

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PUMP prices of petroleum products should go up by only about 10 centavos to 15 centavos per liter this month, and not 30-35 centavos as earlier reported, the Consumer Oil Price Watch said.

COPW chair Raul Concepcion said that if reports that petroleum prices would be increasing by 30-35 centavos per liter were true, the net increase this month should only be 10-15 centavos, with the rest to be covered by the supposed price reduction in June.

In a telephone interview, Concepcion said that local oil firms should have effected a 20-centavo price reduction in June but they did not.

"Since they did not, the supposed price cut of 20 centavos should be used to offset whatever increase are due in July," Concepcion said in reaction to reports saying pump prices could go up by 30-35 centavos this month due to the increase in Dubai crude prices and the depreciation of the peso.

Concepcion said that crude prices went up by $1.16 per barrel from $24.35 in May to $25.51 in June.

At the same time, he said the peso depreciated by 98 centavos from 52.54 to the dollar in May to 53.52 in June.

Sony ends distribution deal with Solid

By Doris C. Dumlao

SONY Corp. of Japan has pulled out its distribution arrangement with local consumer electronics manufacturer Solid Group Inc. for secondary brand Aiwa effective July 1.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, SGI spokesperson Enrique Ligeralde said the move was part of a worldwide business realignment arising from Sony's takeover and integration of Aiwa as a second brand.

Aiwa Co. Ltd. has terminated its manufacturing contract with SGI as early as 2001. This prompted SGI to shut down subsidiary Kita Corp., which manufactured the electronics products supplied to Aiwa. It also mothballed the packaging materials division of another subsidiary Clark Plastics Manufacturing Corp., which supplied the component requirements of Kita.

Although the marketing of the Aiwa brand had been pulled out, Ligeralde said Solid Electronics Corp. would continue providing after-sales support to Aiwa customers.

Sony Philippines, a joint venture between SGI and Sony of Japan, will continue product development and marketing support for Aiwa, Ligeralde said. Sony owns 67 percent of the joint venture while SGI owns the balance. The venture handles the marketing and distribution of Sony products in the Philippines.

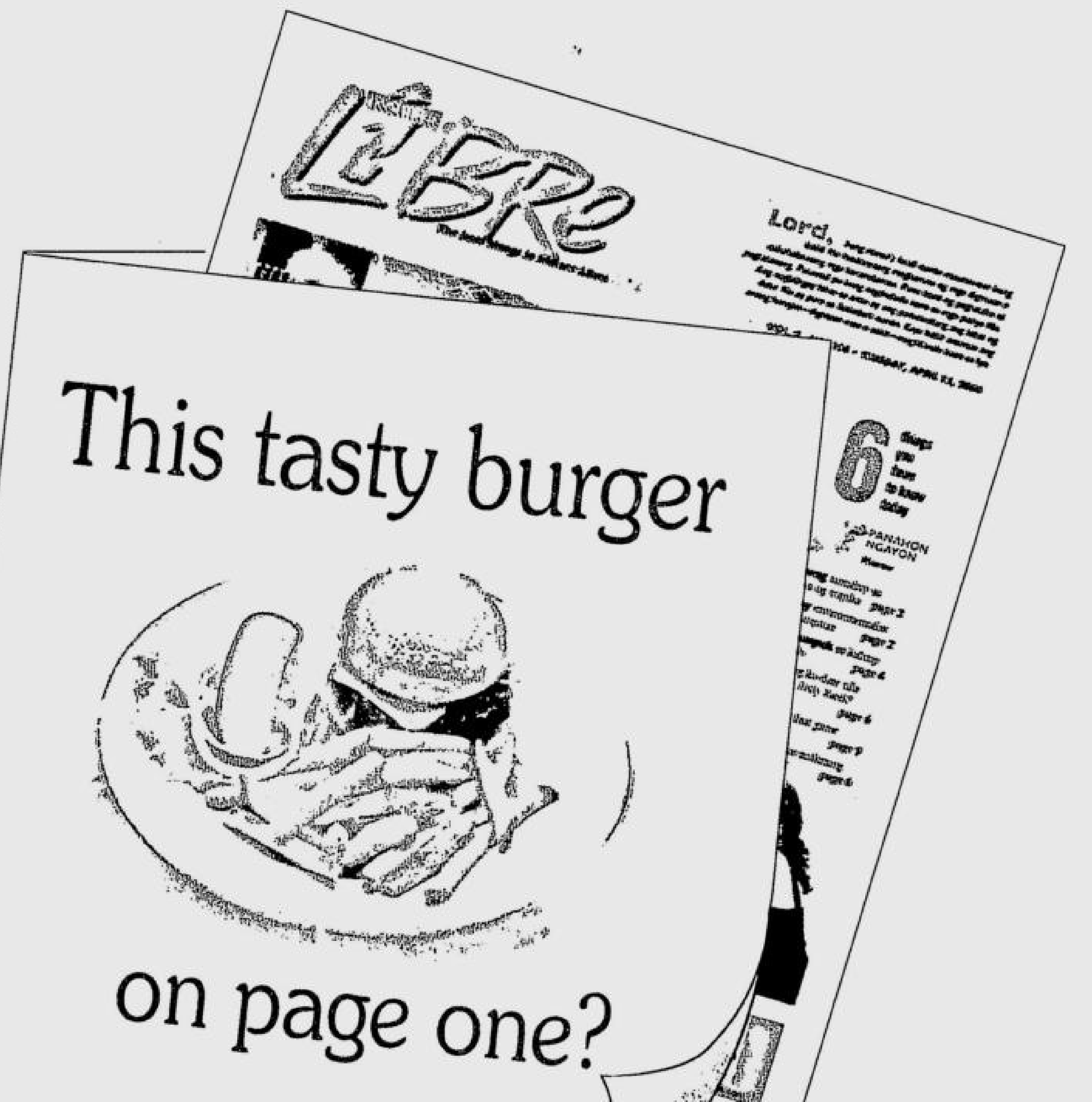
"The company will study new business development options to optimize the use of its assets and marketing capabilities," Ligeralde said.

Last February, SGI shut down wholly owned subsidiary Solid Laguna Corp. due to the slump in orders from Japanese customers Sony and JVC now prefer bringing into the Philippines completely built-up products from other countries following the lowering of tariffs under the Asean Free Trade Agreement (Afta).

SGI suffered from a slowdown in demand in the local market due to the influx of cheap electronics products imported from South Korea and Mainland China, forcing the company to streamline operations since 1998.

Aside from electronics manufacturing, Solid Group has interests in real estate and Internet businesses.

Recently, SGI revived plans to merge with the Destiny multimedia group as part of its venture into the Internet business. Destiny Inc. and Destiny Cable Inc., owned by the family of Joseph and Elena Lim, likewise control SGI.



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BAP's clearing house to sign deal with BSP

By Elena R. Torrijos

PHILIPPINE Clearing House Corp., owned by members of Bankers Association of the Philippines, will take over the physical cash operations of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas under an agreement to be signed by the two parties today.

BAP executive director Leonilo Coronel said the agreement would give PCHC, in a joint venture with foreign groups, the authority to establish a cash center and would provide for the guidelines to govern the operation of the center.

The joint venture will be responsible for the delivery and distribution of cash to banks, which are among the services currently being provided by the BSP.

Coronel said the establishment of a cash center could help banks provide better services to their customers at lower cost.

For the joint venture, PCHC is teaming up with the consortium of Thomas de la Rue and Group 4 Falck.

De la Rue is the world's leading provider of cash-to-secure transactions and the largest commercial security printer and paper maker.

Group 4 Falck is one of the biggest security organizations in the world, providing physical security in customers sites and in the transportation of cash and valuables.

DOTC may bid out MRT-3 extension

By Abigail L. Ho

THE EDSA Metro Rail Transit 3 extension is facing further delay with the government's plan to scrap the Swiss challenge procedure for the project in favor of an open bidding.

Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza told reporters that the DOTC had already informed project proponent Metro Rail Transit Corp. of the Department of Justice's opinion that the project needed to undergo a Swiss challenge procedure. But while waiting for MRTC's reply, Mendoza said the department was also preparing for an open bidding.

A Swiss challenge allows other interested entities to submit offers that are better than that of the original proponent.

"We may not go through the Swiss challenge anymore because of all the technical disagreements we have (with the MRTC). We may just go for a free-for-all bidding. But we haven't scrapped the Swiss challenge option yet," he said.

In an earlier interview, Transportation Assistant Secretary Robert Castanares disclosed that the MRTC had already expressed indications that it would agree to the Swiss challenge arrangement.

"There were high-level talks (between DOTC and MRTC officials) that convinced them to agree to the Swiss challenge," he said.

The MRTC submitted its proposal to undertake the railway extension project last year but disagreements on technical and financial aspects forced the DOTC and the MRTC to continue their negotiations.

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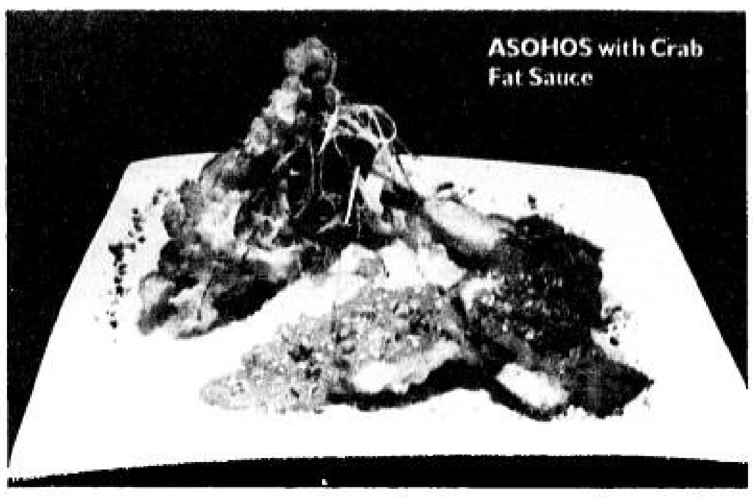
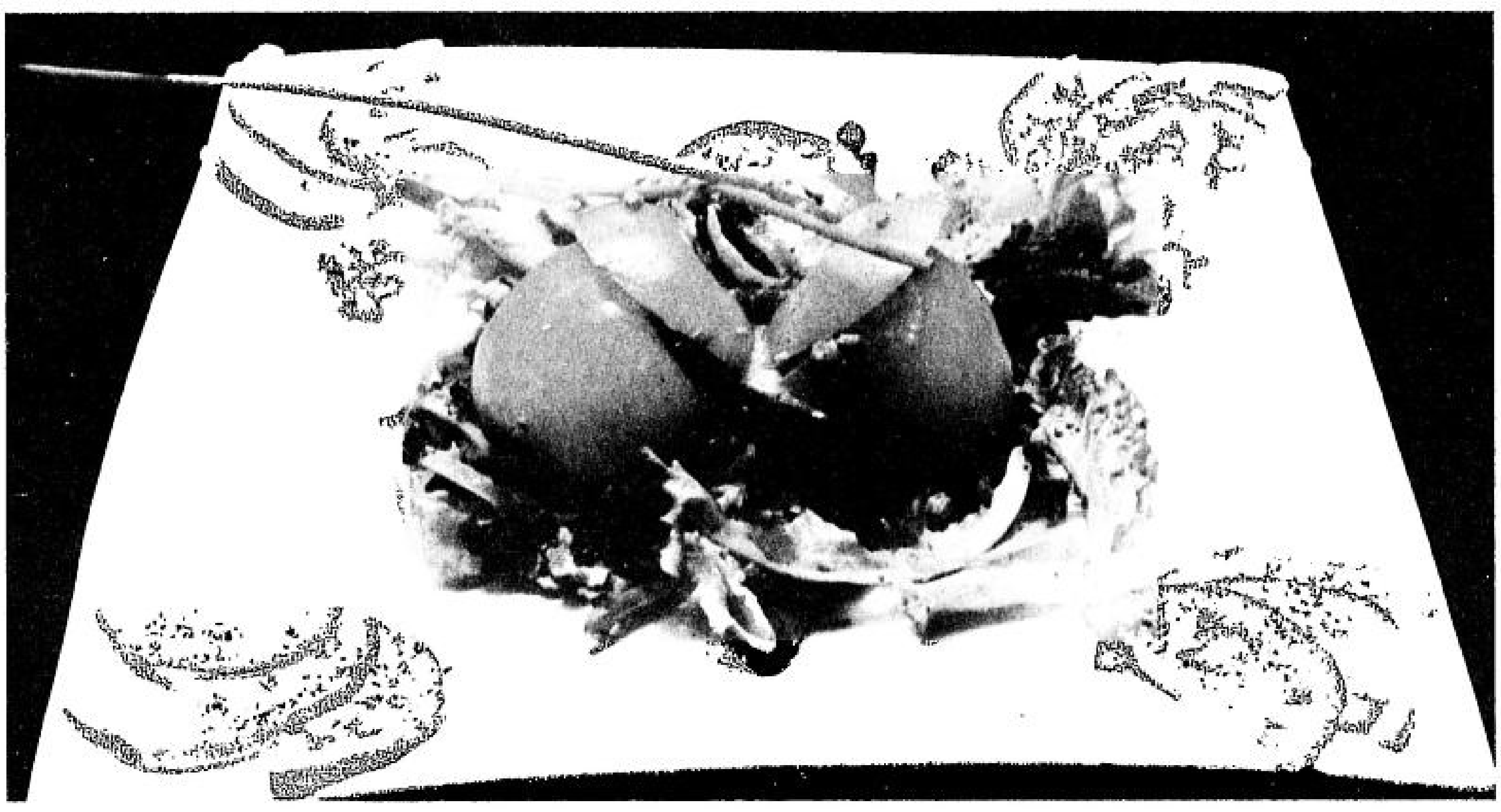
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Fusion cuisine in full force



ASOHOS with Crab Fat Sauce



TOMATOES Stuffed with Pesto Chicken served on a bed of greens

Text by Rowena C. Burgos
Photos by Randy Hormillosa

THOUGH flashy fusion cuisine has its critics, new fusion restaurants continue to sprout. Fusion is a combination of ingredients and cooking methods from different cultures.

Restaurant 12 (tel. 757-4568), at Greenbelt 2, level 1, Ayala Center, Makati, is among the newest places that offer borderless cuisine.

"We showcase the creativity of chefs," says Elbert Cuenca, 12's managing director and co-owner with Jean Henri Lhuillier and Lor Calma, the restaurant's architect and designer.

Since it opened in October, Restaurant 12 has been featuring guest chefs every month, the likes of Noel Silverio, Henry Canoy, Eddie Lugtu, Stephanie Zubiri and Karen Yang.

In the following months, it will showcase the culinary masterpieces of Jay Roces, Dino Guingona and, in a P3,000 per plate one-night affair, Italian chef Massi Mattei.

"If hotels can do it, why can't we do it here? Local chefs are like unsung heroes. They're not given enough exposure unlike their counterparts in the United States and Europe, where chefs are considered as rock stars and bankable artists. Such strategy is both a noble cause and commercial endeavor," Cuenca says.

He started thinking about the guest chef concept when he was still a consultant at Republic of Malate because "its café only served *pica-pica* like *calamares* and *gambas*." But it was at Restaurant 12 that he turned that concept into reality. "We've even put up a theater kitchen with a low counter so diners can see what's going on and how their meals are prepared."

Fresh and flavorful

When he guested as chef at Restaurant 12 from March till May, Marco Legasto prepared Tomatoes Stuffed with Pesto Chicken served on a bed of greens, Stuffed Mushrooms with Bleu Cheese served with sweet garlic sauce, Tilapia with Shiitake and Button Mushrooms served with Thai French sauce and cheese on a bed of spinach, Milked Seabass served with white wine and chive sauce, Chicken with Brandy Mango Sauce, and Grilled Tuna in a light teriyaki sauce, which are now part of 12's menu.

"I had so much fun with the staff and I so loved the weather that I decided to stay," says Legasto, who is now 12's executive chef.

Legasto was only 24 years old when he be-

FUSION/ C2

> At Restaurant 12, food is fun but the kitchen is not a playground of reckless spontaneity

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Korean & Japanese Dishes: July 5 (Sat) 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Michi (Fried Dills), Bi-Bim Bap (Hot Mixed Rice). Bul-Ko-Kee (Barbecued Beef), Pa Jun (Omelet) and Chap-Che (Noodle); Tonkatsu, Katsudon, Teriyaki, Kakiage, Soba-Udon. P1,000

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Bakery & Bakeshop: July 12 (Sat) 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Commercial methods used in preparing breads, pies and cakes including costing, production batching with actual hands-on. P1,500

Restaurant Operations: July 12 (Sat) 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Kitchen organization, cycle menu planning, costing, cost control, purchasing, labor, payroll, inventory, etc. Proven techniques on profitable service operations with free lunch. P1,500

Chinese Dimsum: July 19 (Sat) 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Siopao, Cuapao, Steamed and Fried dumplings, Siomai, Kekiam. Bonus: Almond Jelly. P700

Pulutan Dishes: July 19 (Sat) 1:30-5 p.m. Gambas, Baked Tahong, Tuna Balls, Kinilaw na Tangigue with Gata, Pork Sisig, Chicken Feet, Nilasing na Hipon, Calamares, Mushroom in Garlic Butter. P700

Pinoy Fastfood: (Carinderia, Pondohan, Lugawan, etc.) July 26 (Sat) 9 a.m.- 4 p.m. Lecture on the technical and operational aspects of the business, hygiene, sanitation & safety, costing and actual cooking demonstration of popular low cost fastfood recipes; different kinds of Lomi, Pork Asado, Fresh & Fried Lumpia, Pancit Malabon, Adobong Pusit, different kinds of BBQ, Cycle menu sampler use of extenders, etc. P1,500

Quick & Easy Gulaman: July 26 (Sat) 2-5 p.m. Cathedral Window, Buko-Pandan Salad, Moulded Fruit desserts, Chewy Fruity Salad, Icebox Cake. Bonus: edible centerpiece. P500

CERTIFICATE COURSES WITH HANDS-ON FOR ADULTS. (Pre-registration required)

Cooking II (Comprehensive Cooking) For Career Cooks: July 8-11/22-25 (T-F) 9:00 a.m.-1 p.m. Coverage: Food hygiene & sanitation, Standard techniques of preparing basic stocks, soups and sauces applicable to 1001 recipes; salads and dressing; main dishes; potato cookery; pasta and rice; techniques of deboning and filleting fish and chicken; use of herbs and spices to cooking; basic garnish for plate and platter presentation. Free lunch. P3,000

Cooking I (Basic) For Messmen, Stewards and Beginners: July 8-11 or 22-25 (T-F) 1:30-5:00 p.m. Basic food preparation, cooking methods for vegetables, pasta, meats and poultry dishes; Techniques of de-boning chicken and fish; Basic garnishing. Actual preparation of popular Filipino and Oriental dishes. P2,500

Baking I (Basic): July 16-18/30, 31 & Aug. 1 (W-F) 1:30-5 p.m. Techniques in preparing basic pie crust, different types of cakes, quick bread, yeast breads and more. P2,000

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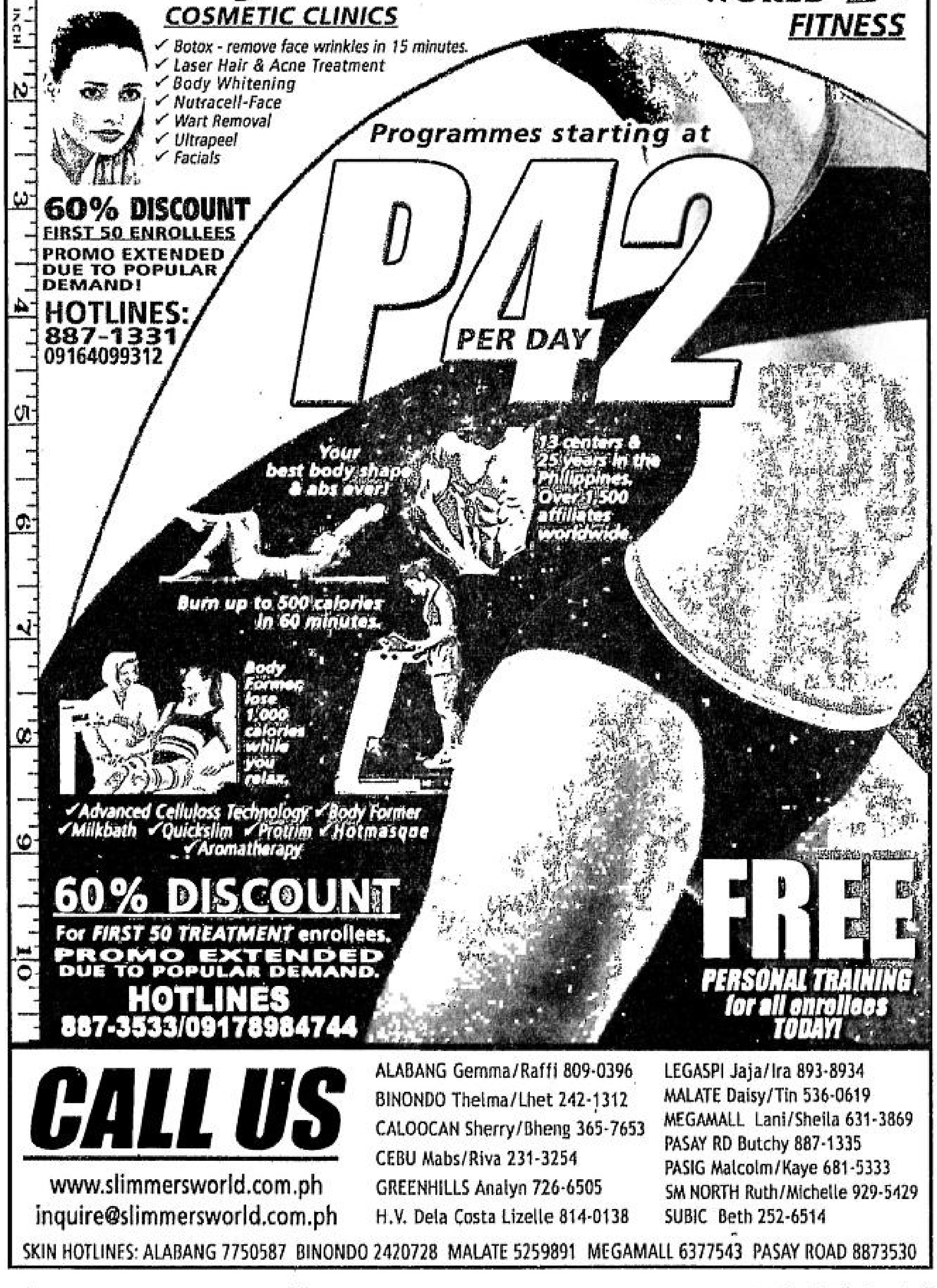
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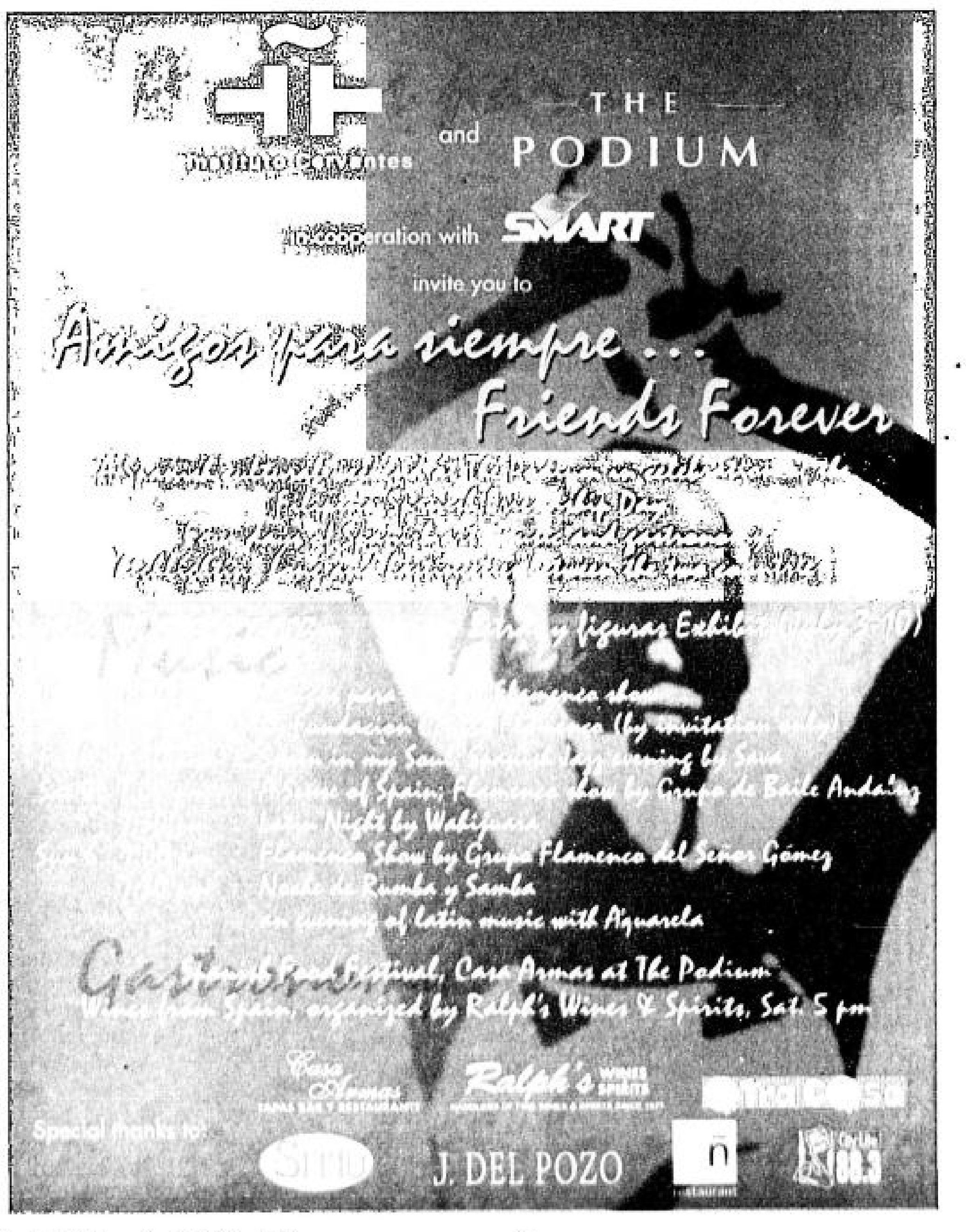
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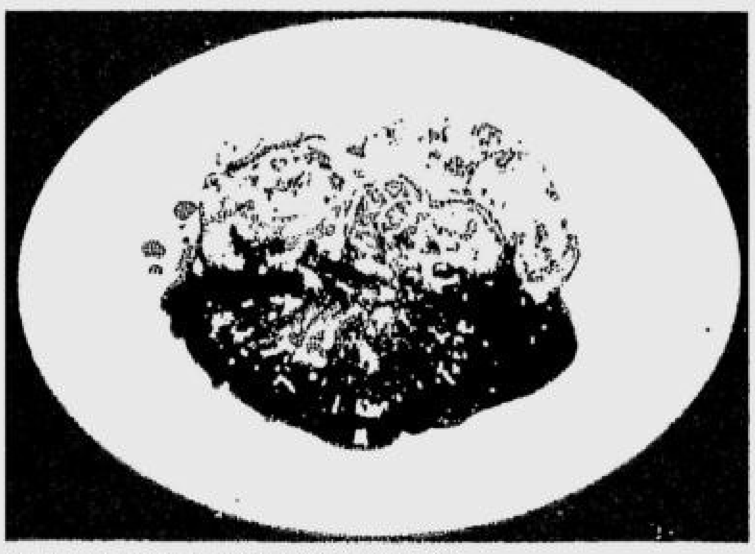
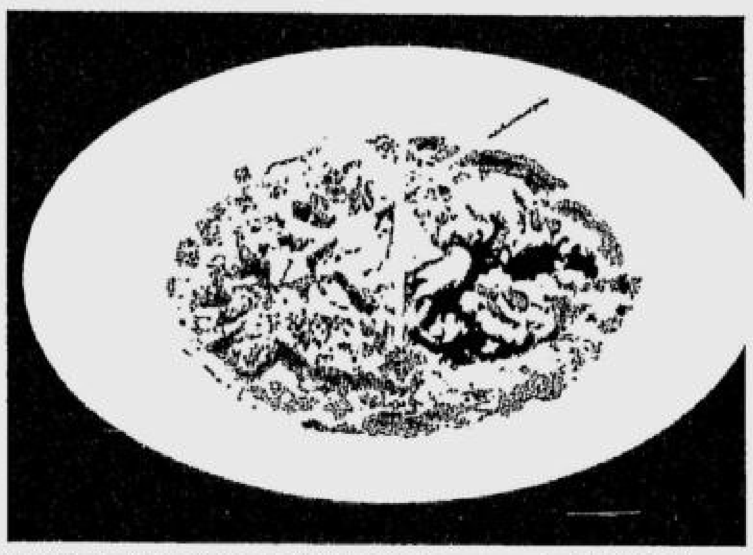
ASIAN Salad



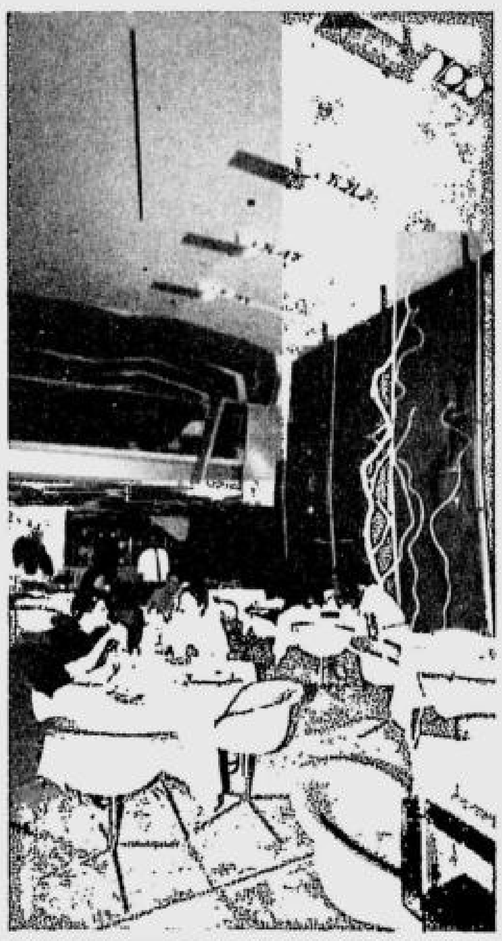
ROASTED Duck Breast in Citrus Dressing



TILAPIA with Shiitake and Button Mushrooms, served with Thai French sauce and cheese on a bed of spinach

Fusion cuisine in full force

RESTAURANT 12 executive chef Marco Legasto and managing director Elbert Cuenca



RESTAURANT 12 was designed by Lor Calma.

From page C1

came executive chef of Ocean Castle Hotel in the Isle of Man, Port of Erin, United Kingdom.

Trained by chefs John Dephin and Marco Puzzini, Legasto likes creating fresh and flavorful dishes that are influenced by different countries and cuisines.

Such dishes, Legasto explains, require time for refinement. In fact, he adds, more chefs are taking time to develop fusion techniques. "They're paying attention to what happens when different flavors are combined."

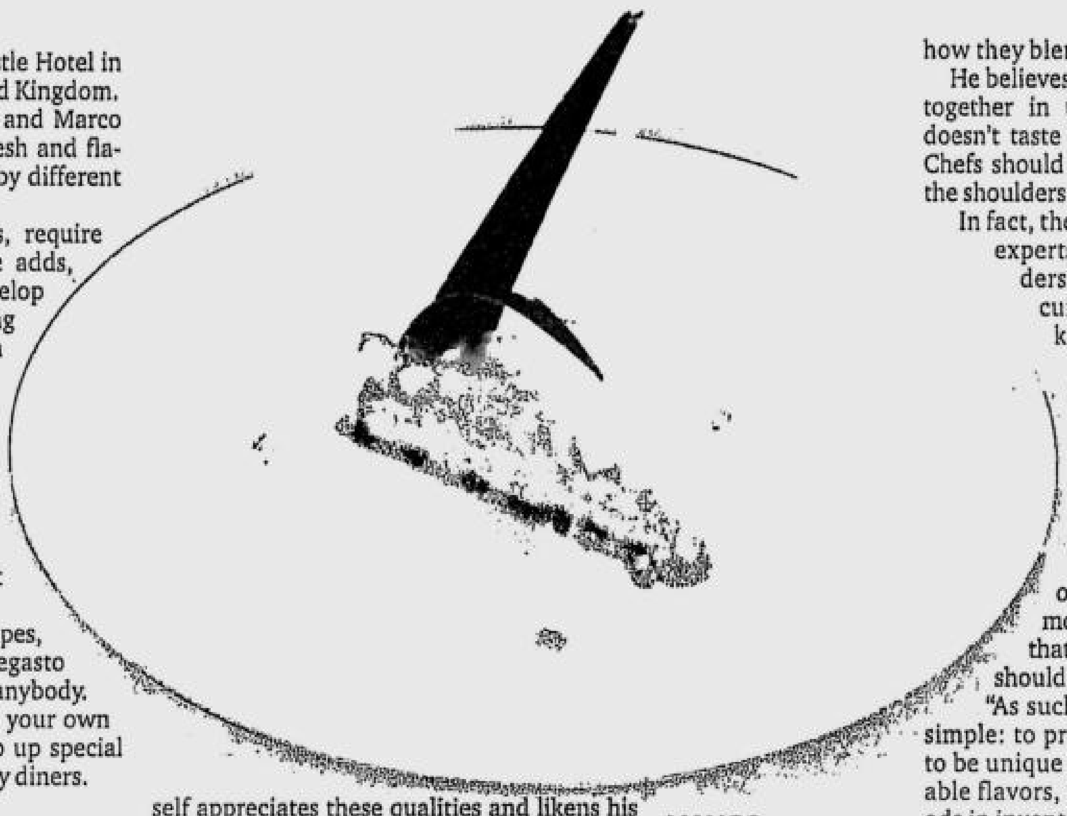
Methods for creating fusion dishes vary. One can start with a product, consider an appropriate preparation, then apply an accent or spice that "sets the dish apart."

Or one can substitute different flavors in traditional dishes.

With fusion, "you find old recipes, then create your own version," Legasto says. "You don't have to follow anybody. You can create your own cuisine, your own music." In fact, Legasto can whip up special dishes on the spot, upon request by diners.

Layers of taste

There is a reason Asian cuisine is most often associated with fusion cooking. Its pronounced elements of hot, sour, salty and sweet also produce a layering effect that interests chefs and excites diners. Legasto himself appreciates these qualities and likens his global-inspired food to good wine. It has "layers of tastes," he said.



MANGO Cheesecake

To Legasto, good cooking requires fundamental techniques, experimentation and "a profound understanding" of foods—their origins and flavors, cooking properties and how they blend with other ingredients.

He believes that food thoughtlessly thrown together in the name of fusion not only doesn't taste good, but confuses customers. Chefs should have fun, he said, "but not on the shoulders of customers."

In fact, the problem with fusion, culinary experts say, is a chef's failure to understand how different kinds of cuisine work, not a failure to keep it pure.

At Restaurant 12, says Legasto, food is fun, but the kitchen is not a playground of reckless spontaneity. "Dishes are less random than they appear," and each is carefully thought out and tested.

Regardless of the type of food or the individual dishes on the menu, Cuenca strongly believes that, first and foremost, dining should be fun.

"As such, the true goal of our menu is simple: to present cuisine that we consider to be unique by creatively pairing recognizable flavors, ingredients and cooking methods in inventive, flavorful and inviting combinations that aren't generally found elsewhere."

E-mail the author at rburgos@inquirer.com.ph

Nutritious soups for rainy season

WHEN it's raining and cold, a steaming bowl of soup is usually a good idea.

But if instant noodle soup is not what you want to fill your cup with, why not try healthy and easy-to-cook peas and lentils soups?

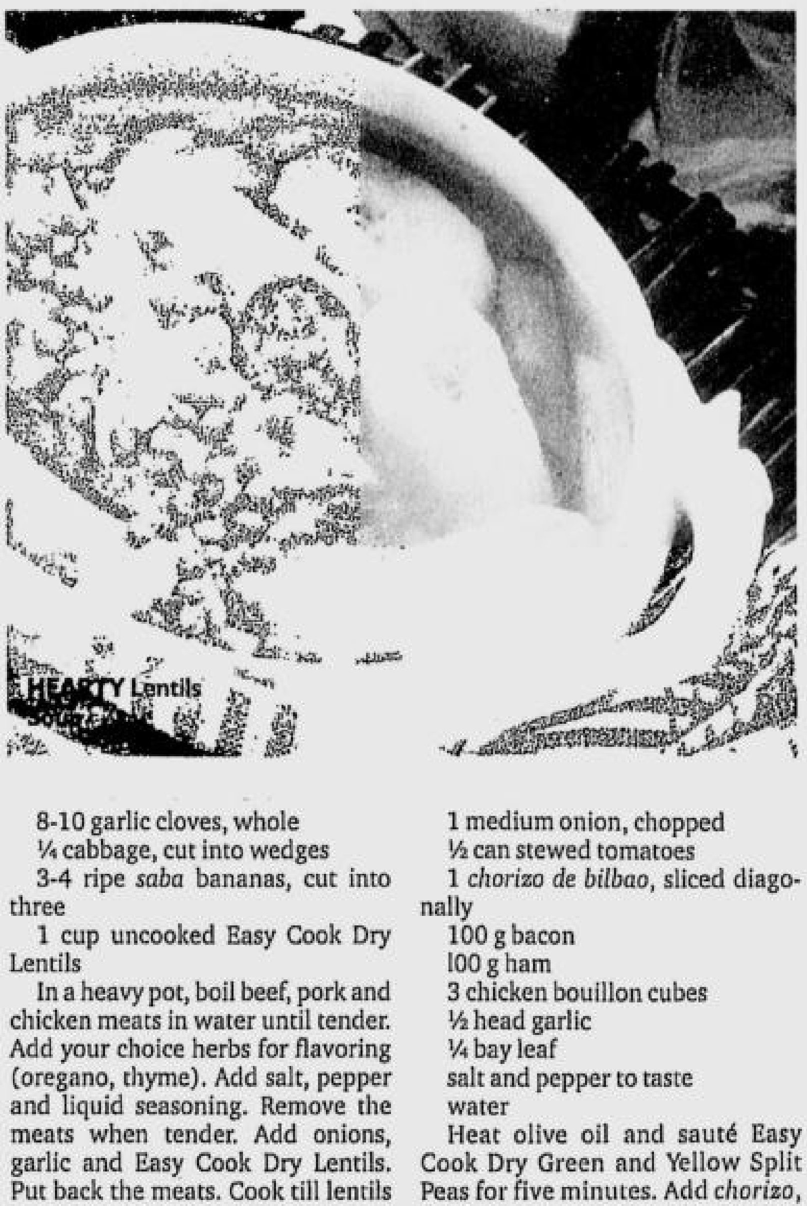
Dry peas and lentils contain protein, dietary fiber and iron. They are also good natural sources of folate or folic acid.

Next time you feel like sipping soup, use Easy Cook Dry Peas and Lentils, which are available in 400 grams at selected groceries and supermarkets nationwide.

Exclusively distributed by Ideal Macaroni and Spaghetti Factory Inc., Easy Cook Dry Peas and Lentils come in three variants: Easy Cook Yellow Split Peas, Lentils and Green Split Peas.

Also available are Great Northern Beans, Pinto Beans and Light Red Kidney Beans. The high-quality peas and lentils are imported from Idaho, United States.

Try these warm and hearty soups at home. For more free recipes and inquiries, write to Ideal Macaroni and Spaghetti Factory Inc. c/o Marketing Department, 33 Luna 2nd St., San Agustin, Malabon City or e-mail idealmktg@edsamail.com.ph.



HEARTY Lentils Soup

Hearty Lentils Soup

¼ kg beef for soup (*kamto*, shank or ribs)

¼ pork belly (with skin), sliced into rectangles

5-6 cut parts of chicken

enough water to cover the meats and make stock

herbs for flavoring (oregano, thyme)

salt, pepper and liquid seasoning to taste

1 medium onion, chopped

8-10 garlic cloves, whole

¼ cabbage, cut into wedges

3-4 ripe *saba* bananas, cut into three

1 cup uncooked Easy Cook Dry Lentils

In a heavy pot, boil beef, pork and chicken meats in water until tender. Add your choice herbs for flavoring (oregano, thyme). Add salt, pepper and liquid seasoning. Remove the meats when tender. Add onions, garlic and Easy Cook Dry Lentils. Put back the meats. Cook till lentils are almost done. Add the cabbage and *saba* bananas. Cook till done. Serve while hot.

Meaty Peas Chowder

3 tbsp olive oil

1 c uncooked Easy Cook Dry Green and Yellow Split Peas

1 medium onion, chopped

½ can stewed tomatoes

1 *chorizo de bilbao*, sliced diagonally

100 g bacon

100 g ham

3 chicken bouillon cubes

½ head garlic

¼ bay leaf

salt and pepper to taste

water

Heat olive oil and sauté Easy Cook Dry Green and Yellow Split Peas for five minutes. Add *chorizo*, ham, bacon and let cook till juices are almost dry and oil surfaces. Increase the beat and add chicken cubes and water (continue to add water as needed). Season with garlic, bay leaf, salt and pepper. Cover and let simmer gently over low heat till peas are done.

Job prospects in Australia for Pinoy hotel and culinary students

UNDER A NEW labor agreement forged between the Federal Government and the Australian Hotels Association (AHA), job opportunities await Filipino students graduating from Australia's major international hotel schools.

The landmark accord allows overseas graduates in Australia's top international hotel institutions—including Filipinos—to work in Australia for up to 18 months after graduation, according to information received by International Education Specialists of Manila (Inter-Ed) from AHA executive director Richard Mulcahy.

Four leading Australian hotel and culinary schools are covered by the agreement, with two of them—Le Cordon Bleu and ICHM—represented in the Philippines by Inter-Ed, which handles the selection and processing of applicants for the programs.

Lindon Price, international director of Le Cordon Bleu, announced that for culinary arts graduates of Le Cordon Bleu with offers of demi-chef positions or higher, the period for the work permit has been extended to four years.

Inter-Ed president Roger Bartholomew hailed the labor accord as "a "fantastic opportunity for Filipino students, especially those interested in the culinary arts, to gain a qualification and work experience in Australia."

Since several local colleges have articulation agreements with Le Cordon Bleu and ICHM, in many cases students will need only one year of studies in Australia before graduating and starting to work there, he added.

According to Mulcahy, "the agreement was proof that, despite the current debates surrounding immigration issues, flexible immigration laws could allow people to enter through 'the front door,' while also providing benefits for the Australian industry."

He said that Immigration Minister Phillip Ruddock and the Federal Government deserve praise for fostering these flexible arrangements that benefit both overseas students and the hotel/restaurant industry.

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Sauce mix captures curry powder's authentic flavor

SINCE THE MEIJI era, ready-made curry powder has been popular in Japanese kitchens to make curry rice easier to prepare.

Now, S&B Curry Sauce Mix has captured the curry powder's distinct complexity of flavor. Its secret is the wealth of over 35 special herbs and spices in the mix, carefully blended and then slow-cooked to bring out the richness of Japanese curry.

S&B Curry carries a variety of flavors to satisfy every curry craving—from spicy hot to mildly sweet. It offers economical and nutritious easy-to-cook meals by adding your choice of meat, fish or vegetable dish.

S&B Curry is now available in leading supermarkets nationwide.

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S&B Curry Sauce Mix

Reinvent veggies for the kids

By Dorothy MJ Ferreria
Contributor

VEGGIES have become expensive because of the rains. Still, despite the cost, it is important to include veggies in our diet as often as possible, for they provide our bodies with fiber that aids in digestion. Fiber also acts as a natural broom that sweeps away bad cholesterol from our system.

To make veggies attractive, we are giving it a new look. We are introducing squash blossoms as a cheesy appetizer, fresh vegetable *lumpia* unwrapped and served in a different container and tempura using veggies with garlic mayo as an alternative dipping sauce.

Surprise family and friends with these vegetable recipes that will surely make them ask for second helpings.

Fried Kalabasa Blossoms

40 pcs *kalabasa* blossoms
1 bar cream cheese cut into small bits
1 ½ c chopped sweet ham or any spicy sausage such as pepperoni, chorizo de bilbao or salami
¼ c chopped bell pepper
¼ c chopped onions
Breading:
all purpose flour
2 whole eggs, beaten
regular breadcrumbs
oil for frying
Dipping Sauce:
bottled Thai sweet chili sauce

Quickly wash the *kalabasa* blossoms under running water. Dry each piece thoroughly. Remove the pistil of each *kalabasa* blossom.

Combine the ingredients for the filling. Stuff each *kalabasa* blossom with the mixture.

Dip the stuffed blossoms in flour, then in beaten eggs, then in breadcrumbs. Deep-fry until golden brown. Drain in paper-lined plates and serve with sweet chili sauce.

Lumpiang Hubad in a Crispy Bed of Noodles

¼ c corn oil
¼ c well-pounded garlic
½ c chopped onion
250 g pork shoulder (*kasim*) sliced into strips
1 c water
2 tbsp oyster sauce
1 tsp rock salt
1 tsp coarsely ground black pepper
1 c carrots, sliced into strips
1 c sweet potatoes (*kamote*) sliced into strips
1 c potatoes sliced into strips or skinned canned garbanzos
2 c string beans sliced diagonally or chicharo
2 c shredded cabbage
1 c spring onions, cut into 2-inch strips
3 pcs firm tofu (*tokwa*), fried and sliced into strips
Sauce:
1 c dark brown sugar
2 tbsp soy sauce
2 tbsp oyster sauce
2 c water
¼ c cornstarch dispersed in ½ c water
Assembly:
fried rice noodles (*bihon*)
fried garlic
wansoy

In a large wok, sauté the garlic and the onions in corn oil until the onions are limp. Add the pork strips and continue to cook until the pork turns white. Pour in half of the water and cook the pork until tender. Add more water if necessary. Season with oyster sauce, salt and pepper.

Add the carrots and continue to cook, stirring continuously for 5 minutes. Then add the sweet potatoes and the potatoes/garbanzos and continue to stir-fry for 5 minutes more or until almost tender. Then add the green beans/chicharo, the cabbage, the spring onions and the *tokwa*. Continue to cook until the beans are done.

Remove from heat and prepare the sauce.

For the sauce, combine the following ingredients in a saucepan: brown sugar, soy sauce, oyster sauce and 2 cups water. In a small bowl, disperse the cornstarch in ½ cup water. Place the saucepan over medium heat and allow to boil. As soon as the mixture boils, add the cornstarch solution in thin streams and continue to cook until thick. The recipe may be doubled or tripled depending on need and preference.

To assemble, make a bed of fried *bihon* in a serving platter. Top with an adequate amount of vegetables. Then top with fried garlic and wansoy. Serve the sauce separately.

Vegetable Tempura with Garlic Mayo

Assorted vegetables such as eggplant, squash blossoms and spinach leaves
Tempura batter:
1 c sifted all-purpose flour
1 whole egg
2/3 c water
¼ tsp salt
1/8 tsp baking powder
Japanese breadcrumbs (*panko*)
corn oil for frying
Garlic mayo:
3/4 c bottled mayonnaise
¼ c all purpose cream
1 tsp minced garlic
1 tsp olive oil (optional)
freshly ground black pepper to taste

Slice the eggplant thinly diagonally. Keep submerged in water to inhibit discoloration. Remove the pistil of each squash blossom. Wash under running water and pat dry. Separate the leaves of the spinach from the stem. Use the stem for another recipe. Wash the leaves in water and pat dry.

Prepare the tempura batter by combining everything in a bowl. Beat well with a wire whip and mix only until blended.

Heat a generous amount of oil in a wok. As soon as the oil is hot enough, working with a piece at a time, dip the vegetable in the prepared batter and roll in breadcrumbs. Deep-fry until light golden brown. Drain in paper-lined plates and serve immediately.

To prepare the garlic mayo, combine the ingredients in a bowl. Keep refrigerated until ready to serve.

Dorothy MJ Ferreria offers cooking, baking and cake decorating classes at Dorothy's Cooking School in Quezon City. Call 721-7735.

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• Butchi
• Mango Sago
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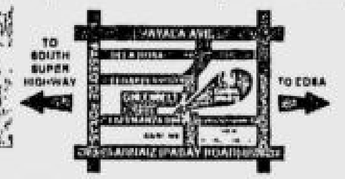


Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner

MONDAY

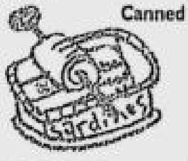
Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Corned beef omelet Bread Butter and cheddar cheese Coffee, hot chocolate or fruit juice	Fried fish steaks (*tanigue* or *maya maya*) with bottled sweet and sour sauce Vegetable chopsuey Rice Papaya with calamansi	Instant nido soup Vegetable tempura with garlic mayo Roast turbo chicken Rice Buko sherbet

TUESDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Cereal and milk Bread Vienna sausage Butter and fruit jam Coffee, hot chocolate or *papaya* shake	Instant cream of mushroom soup Cucumber salad Pork steak with onion rings Rice Gelatin	Pancit *bihon* Fried pork chop Leche flan

WEDNESDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Garlic rice Sardines Coffee, hot chocolate, fruit juice or iced tea	*Tahong* soup *Lumpiang* shanghai Rice Canned fruit cocktail	Green salad Chicken curry Rice Atis

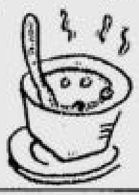


THURSDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Hotcake or waffles with butter and maple syrup Pan grilled spam Coffee, hot chocolate or *guyabano* shake	Clear soup Beef stew Rice Maja blanca	Spaghetti with meat sauce Garlic bread Fresh fruit platter

FRIDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Oatmeal with bananas and cinnamon Bread Cocojam and butter Coffee, hot chocolate or fruit juice	*Adobong pusit* *Ginataang gulay* Rice Gelatin	Chicken *afritada* Rice Chocolate cake



SATURDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Garlic rice Beef *tapa* Fried eggs Coffee, hot chocolate or fresh mango shake	Fried *kalabasa* blossoms Pot roast Potato salad *Pandan* gelatin	Spaghetti carbonara Fried chicken wings Ice cream

SUNDAY

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
Croissant Soft boiled eggs Butter and fruit jam Coffee, hot chocolate, fruit juice or iced tea	*Lumpiang hubad* in a crispy bed of noodles Steamed fish Rice Assorted *kakanin*	Coleslaw Chicken *adobo* with quail eggs Boiled asparagus with tartar sauce Rice Fruit salad

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DTI-NCR PERMIT NO. 2536 SERIES OF 2003

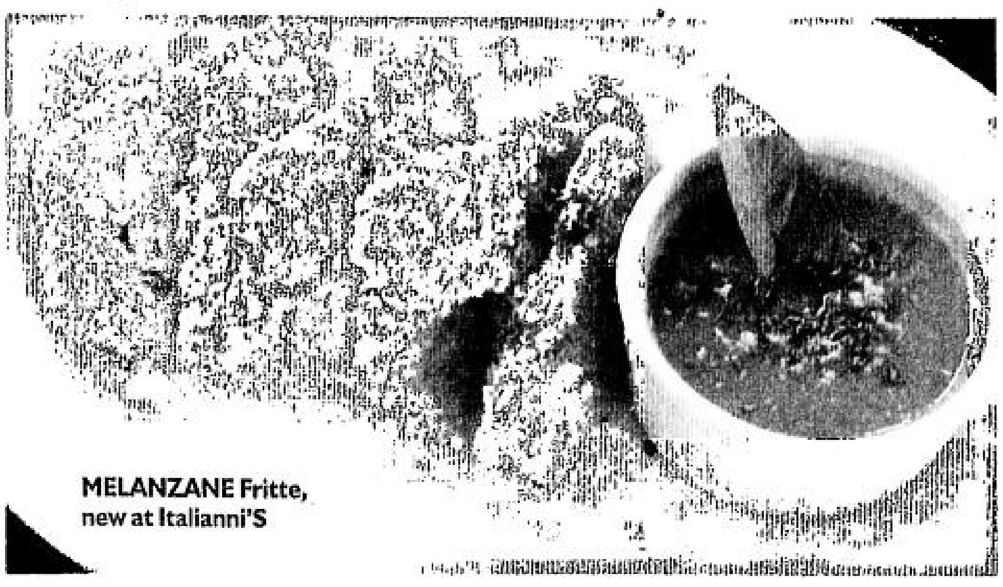
SENTRO'S famous appetizer

Innovative ways with Pinoy food

DINING OUT

SENTRO 1771, now on its second year, has a menu that features ingredients familiar to Filipinos, such as *kangkong, tilapia, galunggong*, Macao Chorizo, Thai dressing, Ponzu and Teriyaki sauce and Tempura, and given a modern twist by Chef Vicky Rose Pacheco of Chateau 1771. Bestsellers are Sinigang na Corned Beef and the Catfish Sentro Style. Vegetarians can enjoy Sizzling Tofu, Spinach and Glass Noodles, and Vegetable Spring Roll. Call 7573940.

ITALIANNI'S Restaurant has three new offerings in its menu. The Grilled Chicken and Roasted Vegetable Salad, Mussels Lombardi and Melanzane Fritte. The restaurant has branches at Greenbelt 2, Glorietta 4, Alabang Town Center and SM City Bicutan.


MELANZANE Fritte, new at Italianni'S

CAFE Astoria offers daily theme lunch buffets from Monday to Saturday. Executive chef Emmanuel Manansala prepares "Sariling Atin," a selection of Filipino foods, Mondays and Wednesdays. Asian cuisine is offered Tuesdays and Fridays. Italian Continental flavors are available Thursdays and Saturdays and Sundays. Buffet includes bottomless iced tea. Cafe Astoria is at 15 J. Escriva Drive, Ortigas Business District, Pasig City. Call 687-1111.

BROTHERS Burger opened recently its seventh outlet at The Fort. Among the sandwiches the chain offers are Brothers' Black Angus Burger, Lamb Burger, Chicken Zumo, Crispy Fish and Cheese Steak. Toppings include Blue Cheese, Cream Cheese with Garlic, Onions, Mushroom, Bacon, Cilantro Créam and Pesto Mayo. Brothers Burger is at Unit B-5, Stop-over II Expansion, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, MM.

CHEESY CRUST. Pizza lovers are in for a treat with Pizza Hut's New Sausage Stuffed Cheesy Crust Pizza. The new pizza has crispy cheddar outside and 3-ft-long sausage inside the crust. Lovers' Feast (good for two) has regular Hawaiian Sausage Stuffed Cheesy Crust, two bottomless Pepsi and two orders of spaghetti for just P299. Call 911-1111 for delivery.

Comprehensive cooking courses

MAYA Kitchen has scheduled a number of culinary teach-ins to be conducted by noted food experts.

On July 5, 9 a.m.-1 p.m, cooking senseis Hiromi Ogino and Ae Kyoung Lee will take turns to demonstrate their respective expertise in Korean and Japanese dishes such as Milchi or Fried Dilis, Bi-Bim Bap or Hot Mixed Rice, Bul-Ko-Kee or Barbecued Beef, Pa Jun or Omelet, Chap-Che or Noodle, and Tonkatsu Katsudon, Teriyaki, Kakiage and Soba-Udon.

Baking with Institutional Mixes is scheduled on the same day, 1:30-5 p.m. Learn how to create and prepare different kinds of brownies like Black Forest, Apple Chunk and Rocky Road, and other Maya Kitchen specials like Pineapple Carrot Cake, Choco-Banana Loaf Chocolate Muffins with Fudge Frosting, Hotdog on Stick, Butterscotch Squares and Chocolate Crinkles.

Maya Kitchen also offers certificate courses such as Cooking I (Basic) for Messmen, Stewards and Beginners on July 8-11, 1:30-5 p.m.

The course covers basic food preparation, cooking methods for vegetables, pasta, meats and poultry dishes, techniques on deboning chicken and fish, basic garnishing, and actual presentation of popular Filipino and Oriental dishes. Also scheduled on the same day, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., is Cooking II (Comprehensive Cooking) for Career Cooks.

Maya Kitchen is at the 8/F Liberty Building, Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City. Call 892-1185/5011 local 108 or e- mail mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph.

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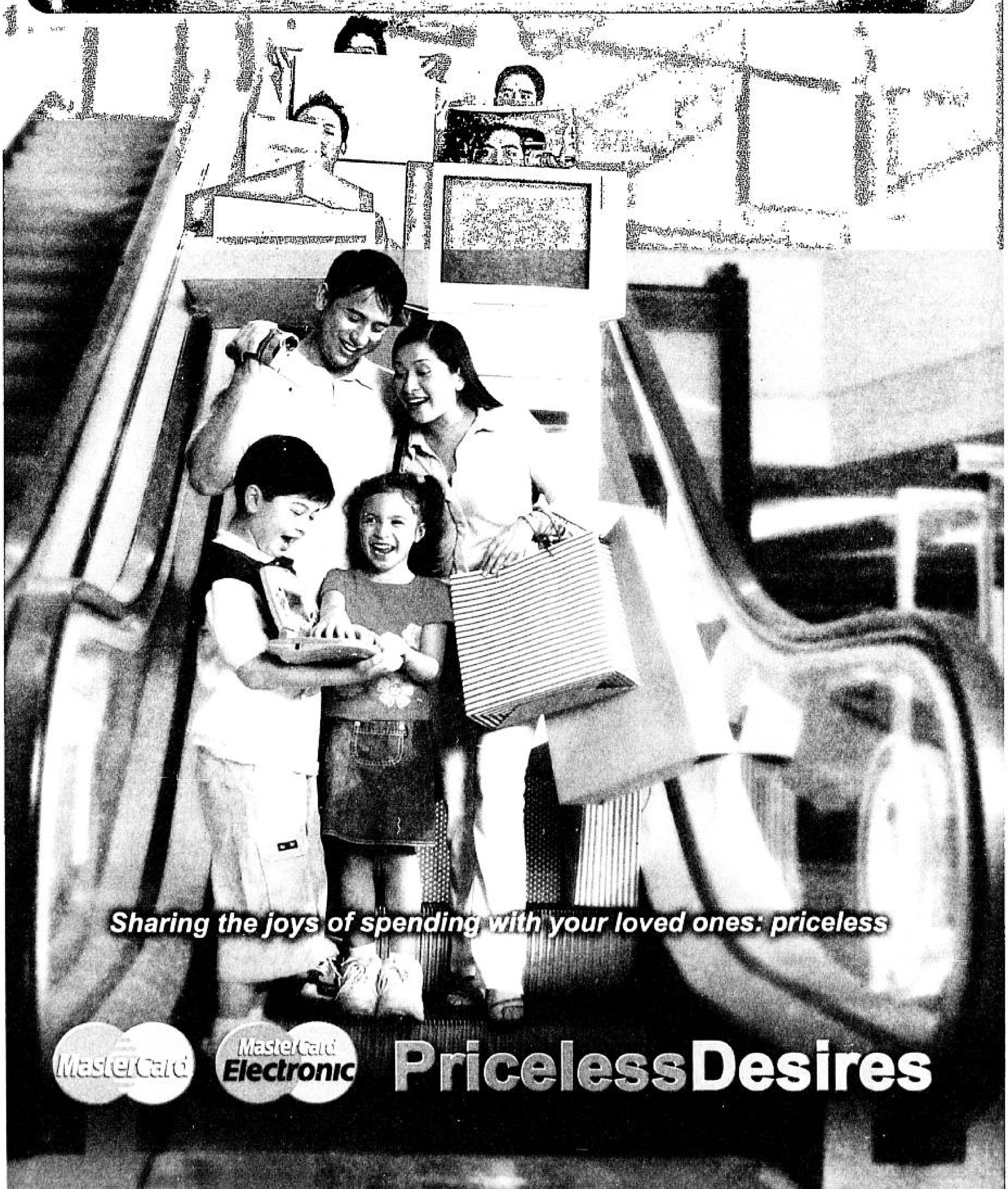
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*Approved by DTI-NCR Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1161, Series of 2003

LIFESTYLE Tastes

Inquirer food page wins international design award

PDI is first in the country to enter the prestigious winner's circle

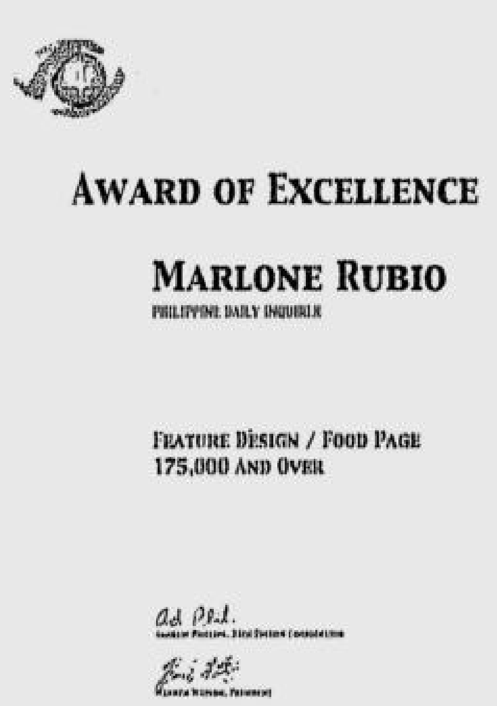
LIFESTYLE
A pasta primer
Why are certain Italian

WINNING page identifying different kinds of Federici pasta from Italy

THE PHILIPPINE Daily Inquirer's Lifestyle page "A pasta primer" (Tastes, 08/22/02) won an Award of Excellence in the 24th Edition Best of Newspaper Design Competition in the category, Feature Design/food page, (175,000 circulation and over).

The prestigious competition, co-sponsored by the Society of News Design and Syracuse University's S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications in New York, drew a near-record 12,760 entries, out of which 1,237 winners were chosen from a field of 351 newspapers from 37 countries.

The INQUIRER, in its first try, has the distinction of being the first in the country to enter the prestigious winner's circle with its award of excellence.



AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

MARLONE RUBIO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FEATURE DESIGN / FOOD PAGE
175,000 AND OVER

The judging, which recognized excellence in newspaper design, graphics and photography, took place last February at the Newhouse School in Syracuse.

Although winners had been notified last Feb. 26 by e-mail, it was only last week that the golden yellow certificates were sent by parcel to the INQUIRER Makati office. Individual certificates were addressed to Lifestyle editor Chelo Banal-Formoso, design director Lynett Villariba and page designer Marlone Rubio.

Four newspapers were adjudged "World's Best-Designed" for 2002: the Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung (Frankfurt, Germany), The Independent on Sunday (London, England), Récord (México City, Mexico) Die Zeit (Hamburg, Germany).

The top five winners in all 21 categories were El Mundo (Madrid, Spain) and its magazines, with 57 total awards; The New York Times (USA) and its magazine, with 48 awards; The Boston Globe (USA) and The Hartford Courant (USA), with 35 each, and Clarín (Buenos Aires, Argentina), with 31.

Other winners included papers from Brazil, Peru, Venezuela, Costa Rica, The Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, the Republic of China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Australia, Italy, Turkey, Greece, Scandinavia and Great Britain.

The top award winners will be honored at the Society's Annual Workshop and Exhibition in Washington, D.C., this coming Sept. 6. All the winners will be showcased in the 24th Edition book, The Best of Newspaper Design, which is scheduled for release this September.

The Society for News Design, founded in 1979, is a 2,500-plus member organization with membership in 53 countries, including three professional and 19 student affiliates.

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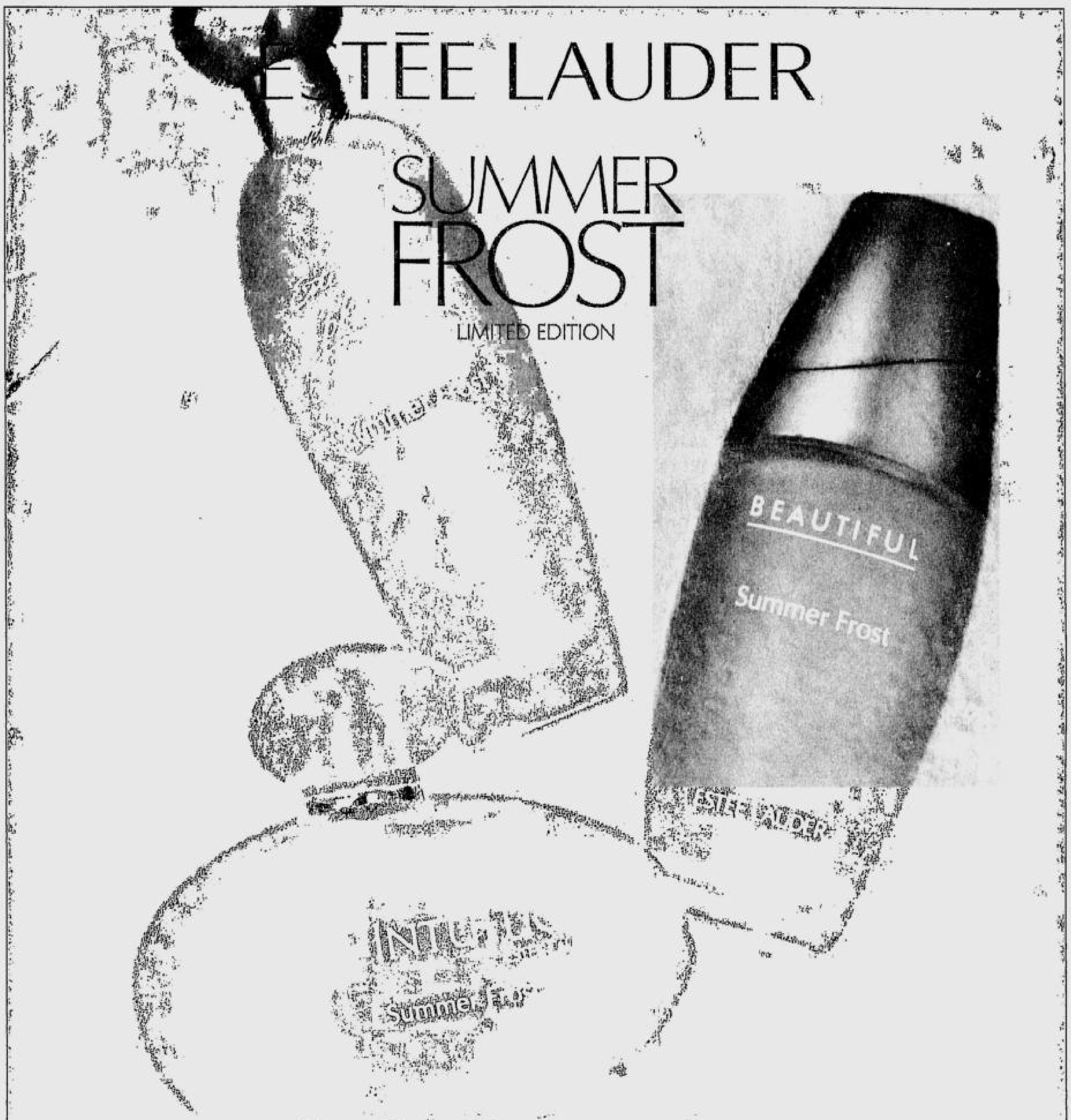
JULY 03 THURSDAY



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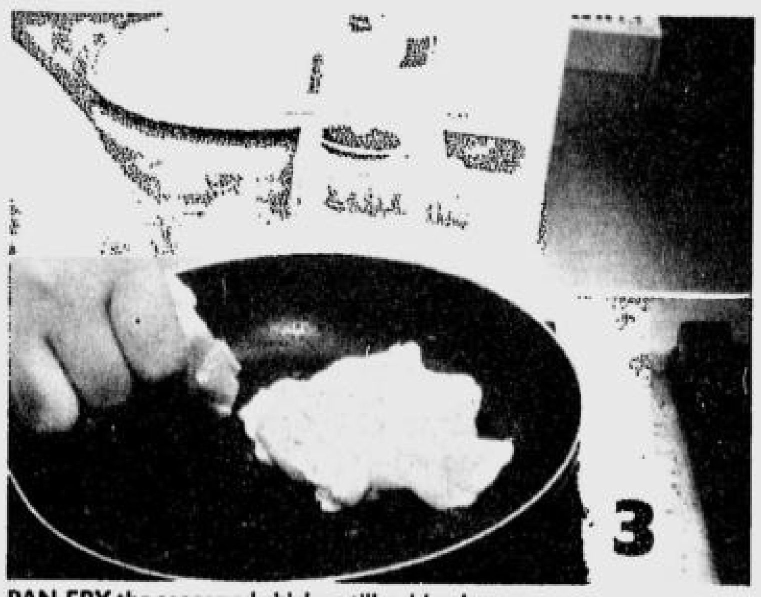
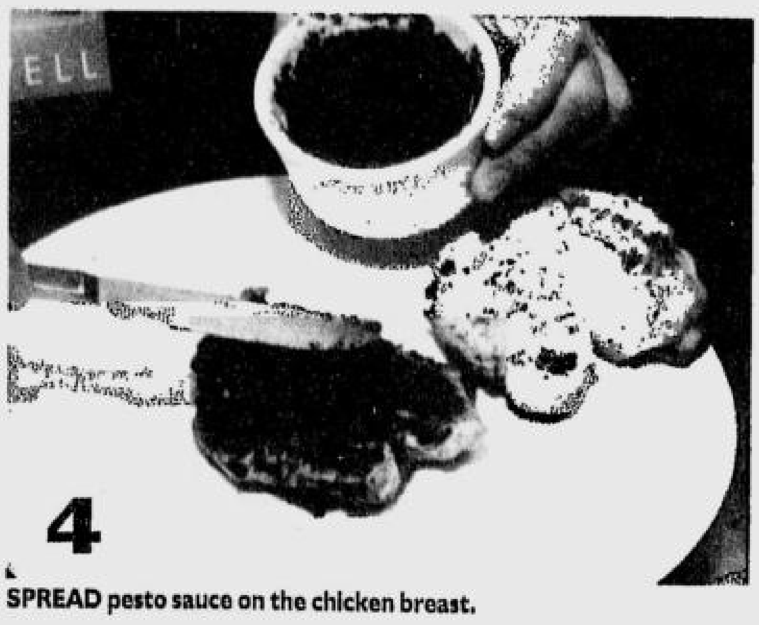


PAN-FRY the seasoned chicken till golden brown.



SPREAD pesto sauce on the chicken breast.

FOLD the chicken.

How pesto can add pizzazz to chicken

SEASON with salt and pepper overnight.

CUT chicken breast fillet in half.

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Roger Carpio

THERE'S a new way to add pizzazz to your chicken. "Bake it with pesto," says Alfred Kipping-Torres, domestic operations head of Living Well Café at the Podium (tel. 638-9590).

STEP BY STEP

The restaurant's Pesto-Crusted Chicken is a flavorful chicken dish with pesto sauce. "It makes for an impressive dinner when accompanied with linguine and a nice salad or just plain rice," says Kipping-Torres.

Pesto has gone from being made and served the traditional way (often with its ultimate mate, pasta) to being served with almost every food imaginable, such as putting it on grilled or baked vegetables, especially with tomatoes, meat, fish, poultry, or bread.

"Pesto is a classic recipe that harnesses the freshness of basil. Its pungent aroma and intense flavor make it a favorite accompaniment not only to pasta, but to other food as well, like chicken," says Kipping-Torres.

In this recipe, the baked chicken draws its delightful taste from the flavors of pesto. Bottled pesto sauce is available in most Italian restaurants and selected supermarkets.

But you can make your own pesto sauce. Simply combine 1 cup of basil leaves (washed and patted dry), 2 garlic cloves, ½ cup pine nuts or walnuts and ¼ cup or more of olive oil in a food processor one at a time until each item is completely blended. When adding the oil, allow it to stream in slowly to insure a complete blending. Add ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese gradually as well until completely blended. Season with salt and pepper.

So now you know how to make basic pesto. Not all that hard, eh?

To preserve your pesto, spoon and scrape into small containers. Cover with a little olive oil. The oil will keep the bright green pesto from turning dark. The pesto will store in the refrigerator for a week or can be frozen indefinitely.

The Pesto-crusted Chicken smothered with toasted walnuts is one of the favorite dishes at Living Well Café.

Ingredients:
250 g chicken breast fillet
Prepared basil pesto sauce
½ c toasted walnuts, chopped
2 tbsp lemon juice
Salt and pepper to taste
4 tbsp Pietro Coricelli olive oil

For suggestions, e-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

SPREAD generous amount of pesto sauce on top of the chicken.

TOP with chopped walnuts and squeeze lemon juice.

BAKE chicken for 10 minutes at 450°F. Serve with salad, pasta or rice.

PESTO-CRUSTED chicken

Nutritious and fun snack for kids

ONE new snack that kids will surely love is Crumpy, a sandwich spread that combines the sweetness of chocolate and the nutrients of hazelnut.

By adding hazelnuts to chocolate, Crumpy provides added nutrients. Hazelnut is a rich source of protein and can help reduce the risk of heart diseases. It is said to help lower cholesterol, and contains other properties that can protect against heart disease, including fiber, Vitamin E, alpha-linolenic acid, oleic acid, magnesium, potassium, and arginine (an amino acid).

Crumpy can also be enjoyed with fruits or as toppings for certain dishes. It can be mixed with drinks or simply savored right out of the jar.

Here are some Crumpy *baon* recipes you may want to prepare for your kids.

Crumpy Peanut Butter Bacon Club

For each sandwich:
3 slices bread (white or wheat)
1 tbsp Crumpy
½ banana, sliced
1 tbsp peanut butter
1-2 strips cooked bacon

Spread one slice of bread with Crumpy and top with banana slices. Spread another slice of bread with peanut butter and top with the bacon. Place the bread slice with peanut butter and bacon on top of the bread slice with Crumpy and banana. Top with the last slice of bread. Carefully cut the sandwich into halves or quarters. Secure each piece with a toothpick.

Let your kids help create these treats. They'll be excited to show (and share) them with classmates. To take to school, they're best packed in small plastic egg boxes.

Crumpy Funny Cookie Sandwiches

Ready-made small butter cookies
Spread the undersides of the cookies with Crumpy.
Stick them together in pairs

For the icing:
Beat together until smooth
¼ c butter or shortening
1 c powdered sugar
1 ½ tsp milk

Using an icing bag and tip 2, pipe little "eyes" on one side of the cookies. Fill another icing bag with Crumpy and pipe the black centers for the eyes plus the mouth. Chill cookie to let icing and Crumpy set.

Crumpy Pizza

Bake according to package instructions: 1 package ready-made pizza crusts (preferably small sizes)

Let cool. Spread each crust generously with Crumpy.

Top with:
Colored candies
Cashew nuts
Dried mangoes
Candy sprinkles

Variation: Crumpy *pan de sal* Pizza—Substitute sliced *pan de sal* for pizza crust. For breakfast, top with dried fruits like mangoes, apricots, prunes and raisins. Use nuts instead of candies and sprinkles.

English muffin or bagel pizza—substitute sliced and toasted English muffins or bagels (available in large supermarkets) for the pizza crust.

CRUMPY Funny Cookie Sandwiches

Bank teller's error and other consumer concerns

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

SOMEONE in the banking business tried to rationalize the error of a bank teller we complained about by saying "tellers are only human." For crying out loud, tellers may be human but they are not supposed to make mistakes, especially if it means erroneously omitting one digit from a five-digit deposit! Which is exactly what happened to the check remitted by Vic del Fierro, president of the Coalition for Consumer Protection and Welfare organization.

He related the following experience to warn consumers that it could happen to them.

Del Fierro recounted that he issued a P90,000 check to a broker and a facilitator of the Parañaque City assessor's office in connection with a real-estate tax payment. The check was subsequently deposited to the bank account of the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

He discovered one week later that the bank teller had entered P9,000 instead of P90,000 on the validated deposit slip. "I could be penalized heavily for tax discrepancy because of that error," he pointed out. "Could that be one reason why the BIR is losing so much revenue?" he asked.

Del Fierro had asked the bank for a detailed report of deposits to the BIR account for that particular day.

"Be eagle-eyed when it comes to your bank transaction record," he warned consumers. Call him for similar experiences at tel. 547-7286 or e-mail vdelfierro@hotmail.com.

What's with Destiny?

It's only right that businessman Arturo S. Monzon of Valle Verde, Pasig, should raise a fuss over Destiny's backsliding cable and Internet services. He has been a loyal customer of the company and does not deserve the series of aggravations and revenue loss he has been experiencing.

It all started when he was forced to settle P24,000 for accumulated bills with penalties. All the while, he thought the company's collection department had been auto-debiting his monthly dues through his credit card, as he had requested earlier.

He didn't want the same thing happening again, so he decided to pay in cash. He advised the company to collect the monthly payment from his residence. But two months went by and no collector came. When he went to the bank to pay his dues, he found out that there was an error in his account number. One week after his payment, he received a notice of service disconnection.

Losing Internet connection intermittently for 15 days was the last straw. He lost count of how many times he complained to customer service and was stood up by technicians. "My experience with them has been exasperating. True, they offered a rebate, but what about the aggravation and lost revenues their disservice has caused me?"

Destiny explained to us that at the time Monzon was complaining about Internet connection, they were experiencing cable problems in the area. Moreover, it required days to get permits and schedules from Ortigas Center to troubleshoot the underground cables.

Destiny's spokesperson added that Destiny had to wait in line for their schedule along with other utility companies like PLDT and Meralco. For Destiny's customer assistance, call 841-9333 or write to the following customercare@mydestiny.net (for cable TV) and tech-support@mydestiny.net (for Internet).

What good is a warranty?

The owners of Ding Hao Chinese Cuisine in Calamba, Laguna, bought two Asahi electric fans from Abenson's appliance store at the Waltermart last April. Barely a month later, the fan blades broke up in parts while the fan was working. According to the owners, broken pieces from the blades hurt employees in the kitchen where the fans were placed. When the owners called up Abenson and requested for a replacement of the units since it was covered by warranty, their call was forwarded to the Asahi service representative.

"We were told that the damaged fan blades were not considered mechanical defects and therefore were not their responsibility. They added that the only way we could get replacements for the damaged blades was to buy new sets from them. When we said the units were covered by the Abenson Small Appliance Replacement Deal, for which we had to pay P200 more, we were told that our request would be forwarded to the delivery staff of Asahi that comes to Waltermart. To date, we have not heard from them," the buyers complained.

(Spokespersons at Abenson at Waltermart told us that products bought from their store were only replaced within three days from purchase. They added that the one-year warranty only covered repair of mechanical and electrical parts. If the owners of Ding Hao Chinese Cuisine are not satisfied with the reply of Abenson and Asahi representatives, we advise them to send their complaint to the Bureau of Trade Regulation and Consumer Protection, 2/F, Trade and Industry Building, 261 Gil Puyat Ave., Makati City. Call the attention of Director Fe M. dela Cruz of Consumer Net Corporate Office.)

More buying concerns

From Christine of koko@info.com.ph: "I bought a pair of Bally shoes for my mother last May at Champs Elysees in France. It was the wrong size, however. And when we tried to get a replacement at the Shangri-La Mall here, we were refused.

"My story had a happy ending, though, after I wrote to a Joe Ng of Bally Hong Kong. He promptly replied to my letter and informed me that the Bally office in the Philippines would contact us. True enough, somebody from Shangri-La called up my mother, and she got the replacement."

J. Jose, a regular customer of Macro-Sucat, was disappointed with the portable CD/VCD player he bought. It was not the same product advertised in the Makro Mail. He complained that getting a refund was a hassle. It entailed arguing with rude employees and going around in circles. The waiting was exasperating, too. Eventually, he got a refund, thanks to the Makro-Sucat manager.

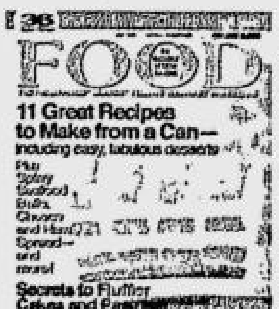
J. de la Rosa wrote: "Why do local garment manufacturers make clothes in such small sizes? Their large/extra sizes are still small [by foreign standards]. Don't they realize that the big-sized people are mostly the ones who have money to buy their products?"

From R. Sanidad (rrsanidad@yahoo.com): "Mercury Drug is no longer honoring the senior citizen's discount for food supplements. I learned about this when I tried to buy *ampalaya* capsules. But this is not right. Although herbal medicine is labeled a food supplement, this is still medicine and most drugs come from plants."

Just reminding the girls at the donate-a-book booth at SM City-North Edsa that a little thank-you goes a long way. Luz Enriquez had answered the call for book donations advertised by SM by giving two bags of books. Donors were supposed to get coupons in exchange. "Maybe the girl at the booth was too tired to smile. She just motioned for me to sign a piece of paper. That was all. No coupon, not even a thank you."

Have a sweet July with easy-to-make desserts

THE JULY issue of Food Magazine features easy-to-make desserts from canned fruits, cream and gelatin, such as Frozen Peaches, Cream Pie, Fruit Salad Loaf, Tutti Frutti Pie and Buco Lychee Salad.


FOOD
11 Great Recipes to Make from a Can—
Secrets to Fluffier Cakes and Pastries

Baked pineapple pie, using crushed pineapples, can have a rich fruit taste that's like a cross between butterscotch and apple pie.

Other dishes featured in the magazine's July issue are a chili dish, Pasta Sardinia Primavera, Spicy Seafood Balls and Chili Pork with Hoisin Sauce. Another dessert is Aloha Tropical Cupcakes, with the flavor of coconut and the richness of chocolate. All recipes in Food are tried and tested in the magazine's test kitchen and are guaranteed to be doable and delicious.

Other features in this month's issue include healthful ways to fight SARS, step-by-step procedures for making *salsa monja* and the Two-Week Menu Guide.

Food magazine is available at bookstores, newsstands, supermarkets and convenience stores. Call 415-2272 local 4658.

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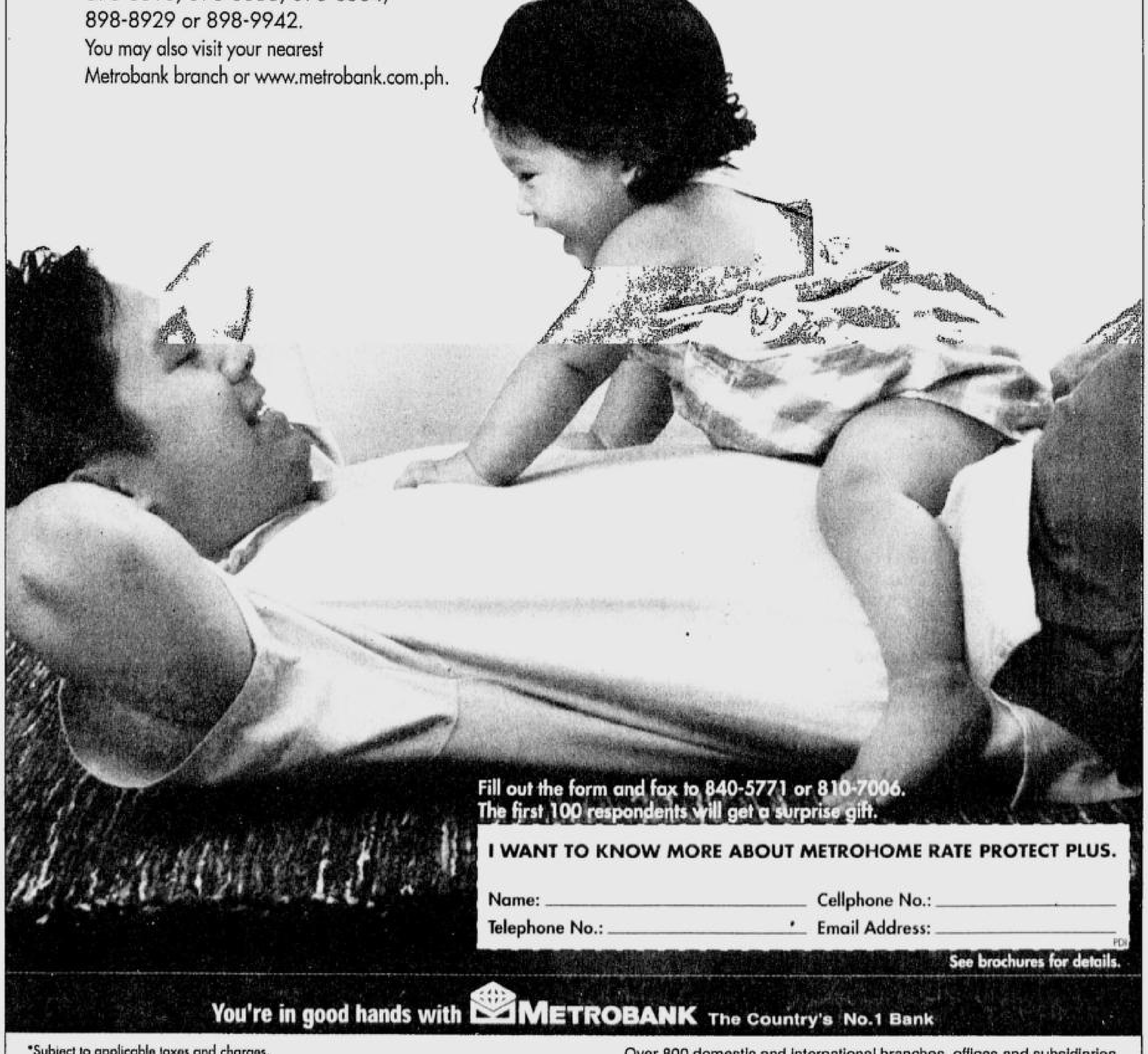

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All the king's men

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

THE JOYFUL Cook was adding double thick cream to eggs so she could beat then scramble them for breakfast with St. Sandok, the talking spoon she inherited from Lola Uning.

"All the horses and all the king's men couldn't put Humpty together again," Sandok sang out while focusing his invisible eye on the broken eggshells. "Scrambled eggs would have been a real joy to Spanish soldiers in the Philippines. In the early Conquista they served the Crown without pay or means of gain. One can only imagine what abuses hunger drove them to."

THE JOYFUL COOK

Felice Prudente Sta. Maria

Royal rice

"Bishop Domingo Salazar in 1583 said it was such a pitiful thing to see men of rank and quality, and gentlemen who have come for private opportunity, poor, ill-clad, without shelter, service or food, and needy, enduring hunger and shame for the same of supplying these needs—in the same day dining at one house and supping at another. Soldiers pawned or sold their weapons for food; some lived with native women just to stay alive. In the Mindanao campaign, four to five soldiers shared one shirt!" Sandok recounted.

"I never thought you were old enough to have seen all that," said TJC.

"I wasn't but the trees near the coconut grove where part of me comes from told us stories. If you say that the walls hold many secrets, you can imagine what forests and groves have seen over time," Sandok explained. "Spanish soldiers used to desert all the time. At least the King finally decided to give his troops, civil officials, convents, active missions, hospitals and galleon staff rice rations. By 1636 to cut down on the royal burden though, sailors were fed only when afloat."

"I recall that Frederick the Great said, 'The art of conquering is lost without the art of subsisting,'" replied TJC. "Didn't the Spanish monarchy encourage homesteaders to teach Filipinos Iberian-style farming?"

"Yes, but still Filipinos far outnumbered Spanish settlers who preferred to earn from trading Asian products on the galleons than themselves tilling the soil. You can imagine what it was like in times of trouble when public sympathy was not with the conqueror. During the Philippine Revolution, no food got to Spanish lines—neither a handful nor a cartridge of rice, they used to say," Sandok noted.

Stone biscuits

"Soldiers in the Philippines whether Spanish or American shared a common misery: hardtack, from 'hard' meaning firm and 'tack' meaning food. The large coarse wafer eaten on the ocean was also known as biscocho, sea or ship biscuit, and sea or pilot bread. The coarsest bran was kneaded, reputedly by feet stomping the mix down in troughs. It was shaped, pierced with holes, baked hard, then exposed in lofts over the oven till it was perfectly dry in the hope it would not get moldy. You had to hammer it into small pieces to eat it," Sandok recounted.

"A galleon heading from Manila to Mexico carried 40,000 pounds of hard tack for a half-year-long journey. Wheat didn't grow in the Philippines and had to be imported from China to make sea biscuit. Magallanes carried 423,563 pounds of hardtack stored in wooden barrels, enough to last six years. But in just a few weeks all sorts of vermin started gnawing their way out of and into the biscuit. Even travelers depended on hardtack for their food," he added.

"When Filipinos saw Legaspi's crew take their meals, they concluded the foreigners ate stones! They also thought the Spanish had straight tails—actually—because they wore their swords—and that they drank fire causing smoke to come out of their noses—the result of smoking tobacco, I remember reading," TJC said.

Sam's 4 Bs

"The USA's Independence Day or Fourth of July is tomorrow," she noted. "American soldiers to the Philippines in 1898 were known as Boys in Blue because of their uniforms that contrasted with Spanish cotton cord with its blue stripes. The USA bugle sounded mess call and the men chanted 'Soupy, soupy, soup without a single bean; Porky, porky, pork without a streak of lean; Coffee, coffee, coffee the meanest ever seen!' But that was the opposite of what they got eating 'government straight.'

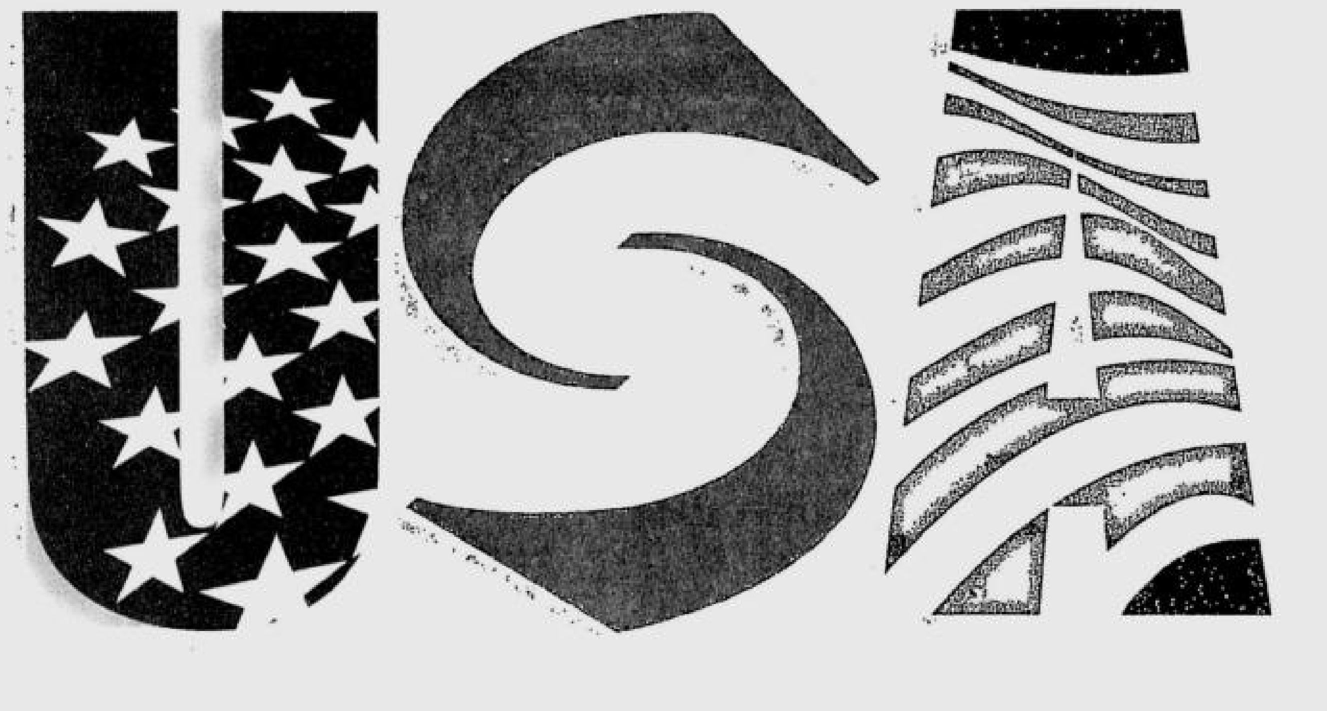
"America showed its mettle in the way it outfitted its first off-shore militia into Asia. Everything was carted across the Pacific Ocean from the California shorelines including the kitchen sink! And if the sink broke down in the new territory, the Quartermaster was obliged to come up with an identical replacement. Canned goods opened the way for all sorts of comfort foods to accompany Uncle Sam's troops as standard food rations. By 1899 General Otis was instructed to build a cold storage plant so ham, bacon and butter could be brought in. Already fresh vegetables like the ones the boys knew from home were coming in to the US Commissary from America and Australia.

"America fed not only its army but its civilian support staff and their families. New England women insisted on accompanying their menfolk and carried in everything from knitting needles to bird cages to assure that their heroes would feel things in the strange country were just like home.

"The women protected their recipes from Chinese camp followers who would set up 'Amelica style' restaurants. Yankee dishes mixed with Spanish and Chinese favorites among them being 'hankeys'—the early Chinese immigrant's pidgen for pancakes. No matter how an American wife tried to conceal her kitchen secrets the Chinese cooks learned them," TJC said with a laugh.

"Then I guess it's not enough you think scrambled eggs today. Why not pancakes Filipino style—meaning serve them for *merienda* today. Or do it tomorrow and top them with canned cherries, whipped cream and imported frozen blueberries for a red, white and blue motif," suggested St. Sandok, already thinking of apple pie, waffles, ham steak with pineapple rings, angel food cake and other American favorites that had slipped into his dreams. "I'm so glad food is portable culture. If you can't visit the world, you can at least taste it," he noted with nostalgia.

Next: Relief from the weather



Stars, Stripes, Shang.

Hello, America!
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★ **STARS AND STRIPES SALE*** JULY 4-20. Indulge and enjoy up to 70% off! Participating American labels and stores: Anne Klein of New York, Armani Exchange, Beauty Bar, Calvin Klein Underwear, Coach, DKNY, Florsheim USA, Guess, Kenneth Cole, Liz Claiborne, Claiborne for Men, Mrs. Fields, Nach-O-Fast, Naturalizer, Polo Ralph Lauren, True Value Home Center, Union Bay and Van Heusen.

*Per DTI-NCR-Permit No. A3-427 Series of 2003

★ **All-American Trade Show**
JULY 1-15, Level 1, Shaw Hallway
A remarkable showcase of American products from healthful produce to fine wines to succulent US beef.

★ **Field to Fashion Exhibit**
JULY 1-30, Figaro Area
A U.S. Cotton Council Exhibit that gives you a glimpse of the history of US cotton from field to fashion.

★ **Collage**
JULY 3, Grand Atrium, 6 p.m.
Candy for the eyes and music to the ears. That's DanzJazz Studio entertainment company direct from Guam.

★ **The Shang Star-Spangled Fashion Showdown**
JULY 5, Grand Atrium, 6 p.m.
Attention, fashionistas!
It's fashion-forward time as popular labels and top PMAP models take centerstage.

★ **American Square Dance Exhibition**
JULY 13, Grand Atrium, 4:30 p.m.
Dance goes American! The Manila Hoedowners put on their dancing shoes and show what they've got in the square dance exhibition.

★ **Dream: The World of Entertainment**
JULY 15-31, Level 4, Shaw Side
The world of Dream as represented by Dream Satellite TV's stylized mall "walk" featuring Disney Channel, HBO, AXN, ESPN, Star Sports, National Geographic, Dream Golf.

★ **Red, White and Blue Kids Party**
JULY 18-20, Grand Atrium
Exciting kiddie activities hosted by Candy World, Dairy Queen, Dippin' Dots, McDonald's, Mrs. Fields, Orange Julius. Complete with kiddie rides, face painting, mug painting by Color Me Mine, Crayola & Jesuit Communications' "The Great King" storytelling with Kuya Bodjie.

★ **The Great Chocolate Adventure**
JULY 5-25, Levels 4 & 5
Chocoholics, here's a great chocolate experience! Get a chance to win a free weekend stay at EDSA Shangri-La Manila and Shangri-La Mactan Island Resort by guessing the number of chocolate bars used for the chocolate tree and piano.

★ **Pop & Jazz Concert Series**
JULY 11 & 25, Grand Atrium, 7 p.m.
JULY 12 & 26, Grand Atrium, 6 p.m.
Jive to Manila's top pop and jazz bands as they bring you top American hits from classics to oldies to up-to-the-minute tunes.

★ **U.S. Beef & Wine Promotion**
JULY 16-AUGUST 15
Enjoy gastronomic delights and savor the U.S. beef offerings at Café Provencal, California Pizza Kitchen, Dome Café, Gloria Maris, Steaktown, Struan & Tang's Tea Salon, and Trattoria Gourmet.

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